Boudica and British historical culture, c. 1600 - 1916

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Preface: heroism and history

In its original form, this project was to be a study of ideas of female heroism, or the ways in which the concept was constructed and perceived by the British public during the great age for hero-worship, the nineteenth century. In what in hindsight appears to have been a deeply naive endeavour, my initial plan had been to focus on a series of case studies of women who had achieved notoriety during the reign of Victoria in order to identify and compare the different heroic ideals to which women were held. My first case study was to be of Boudica (or Boadicea, as she was known to Victorian audiences). During the course of researching the first case study, it became increasingly clear that to write about the concept of heroism and the distant past was to engage with the process of "making history": in the sense both of relating a hero or heroine's impact on a given narrative of events, and in the sense that heroic reputations reveal the role of mediators (that is, the historian, poet, artist, etc. who interrogates a body of evidence) in interpreting the past, as well as in relating the element of the past in question to the intended audience. But I also found that in choosing Boudica, I was faced with a historical figure for whom the historical scholarship was vanishingly slight, but whose reputation had long been the almost exclusive purview of scholars of literature. Soon I was overwhelmed with questions about the relationship between past and present, fact and fiction, and even time and space. The whole project shifted, and Boudica became its sole focus, but it was clear that literary scholarship, heroism studies, and the history of history could offer few answers on their own. A new approach was needed, and so this project became not a study of Boudica, but an articulation of the idea of historical culture.

Introduction

Boudica and the idea of historical culture

Part I. Introduction

> Look round, and view your numbers. Behold the proud display of warlike spirits, and consider the motives for which we draw the avenging sword. On this spot we must either conquer, or die with glory. There is no alternative. Though a woman, my resolution is fixed: the men, if they please, may survive with infamy, and live in bondage.[1]

With these moving words, the warrior queen Boudica[2] entered, and very soon afterward, exited British history. This was not a permanent exit, however. Following a lengthy period of obscurity, Boudica has remained one of the most enduring figures in British history, as well as in poetry, drama, imagery, and sculpture which takes the past as its inspiration. There have been some studies of the phenomenon of Boudica, but none have understood her in the context of historical culture in Britain.

The speech quoted here is from Tacitus's *Annals*, one of only two original sources for Boudica's life. But the moment of its delivery – and Boudica's story as a whole – has evolved over the course of many centuries to become the subject of poems, plays, and historical novels. The statue of Boudica that stands on Westminster Bridge

[1] There are a number of versions and translations of the speech. For a discussion, see E. Adler, *Valorizing the barbarians: enemy speeches in Roman historiography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), pp. 117-176.

[2] "Boudica" is now the accepted spelling, though references to "Boudicca" persist. See K. Jackson, "Queen Boudicca?" *Britannia* (1979), p. 255. In this thesis, I will employ "Boudica" almost exclusively, but I will refer to "Boadicea", "Boadicia", "Bonduca" and "Buddug" where contemporary authors have done so. "The character of Boudica" should be taken to refer to any name under which the historical character appears, especially in a fictional context.

shows the warrior queen in full battle array, just as she was described in classical sources. One of the foundational questions which this thesis attempts to address is how two slim records (the details of which are given below) from nearly 2000 years ago survived long enough to be transformed into the iconic statue of Boudica so prominently displayed on across the road from the Houses of Parliament in 1898. The story behind the statue itself will form part of Chapter Five.

Boudica is still well-known to twenty-first century audiences, but a recapitulation of her story seems apposite at this early stage. It will also serve as an introduction to the enormousness and complexity of her posthumous life, with its beginnings in classical history, its sixteenth-century rediscovery, and its subsequent iteration over five hundred years and more. According to the extant sources, Boudica was the queen of the Iceni who flourished during the initial stages of the Roman invasion of Britain.[3] The Romans had first arrived in Britain, then populated by tribes of indigenous peoples, in 55-54 BC under the leadership of Julius Caesar. The emperor chose not to lead a full-scale invasion of the province of Britannia and contact between the Romans and the Britons remained relatively placid, with the former viewed as fairly benign by the latter. This remained the state of affairs throughout the reigns of Tiberius and Caligula. It was the emperor Claudius (reigned 41-54) who finally resolved to conquer Britannia in 43 AD. Claudius sent four legions to occupy the island and subdue the native Britons. The sudden violent turn in the relationship between the Romans and the Britons did not fail to provoke an equally violent response from a people whom Tacitus described as "broken in to obedience, not to slavery."[4] But British resistance

[3] Many archaeologists have attempted to piece together the story of Boudica's revolt. See for example G. Webster, *The British revolt against Rome AD 60* (London: Routledge, Rev. Ed. 1999).
[4] Tacitus, *Agricola and Germania* (London: Penguin, 2009) 10.

was shambolic and sporadic; the Romans benefitted from the lack of cooperation between the numerous and often quarrelsome British tribes. The rebellion of Caractacus (known Caradog in Wales), king of the tribe known as the Silures, who were settled in what is now Wales, was notable for its length and, at least initially, for its successes. However, it ended with Caractacus's capture by the pro-Roman queen Cartismandua of the Brigantes in 51 AD, and his subsequent extradition to Rome.

Lacking any coherent strategy, each British tribe reacted to the state of war in its own way. Like the Brigantes, Boudica's Iceni tribe of modern-day East Anglia were on relatively good terms with the Romans, although the relationship proceeded with some caution on the part of the Iceni. The Iceni king, Boudica's husband Prasutagus, died in 60 AD and, believing that by doing so he could protect his kingdom from wholesale annexation by Rome, he left half of his lands and riches to the emperor Nero. The other half he bequeathed to his two daughters, whose names and ages go unrecorded, under the guardianship of their mother, Boudica. The effect of Prasutagus's decision was the opposite of what he had intended: Roman soldiers plundered the whole of the Iceni kingdom, the King's relatives were enslaved, Boudica was scourged, and the two royal children were raped. These outrages were but the latest and most horrifying to have been suffered by the Britons and, stirred to fervency hitherto unseen, both the Iceni and the Trinobantes rallied to Boudica. She became the leader of a full-scale rebellion against the most formidable army then on earth. After sacking the settlements of Camulodunum (present-day Colchester) and Verulamium (now St. Albans) Boudica's army brought its destructive force south to Londinium. Tacitus records that 80,000 people were killed by Boudica's army, without regard for age, infirmity, or sex. The Britons were finally routed by the Roman governor Suetonius Paulinus. He brought his

army from the distant Isle of Mona (Anglesey) where he had been occupied in attempting to clear the Druids from their sacred forests, mostly by means of incineration. Her rebellion in ruins, Boudica committed suicide rather than be taken alive.

The first writer to relate this version of the story to posterity was Cornelius Tacitus (56/7- c.113) in two works: first in *Agricola* (97AD) and then more fully in the *Annals* (c.113). *Agricola* was the eponymous biography of Tacitus's father-in-law written shortly after the great man's death.[5] Agricola had been military tribune of Britannia during the period of Boudica's mutiny and thus a substantial portion of *Agricola* was devoted to a discussion of the ethnography of Britannia. This has made it an indispensable source for this period in very early British history, a time and place from which few written records remain. Boudica's story as it appeared in this work was brief. Tacitus made no mention of the wrongs Boudica and her family suffered at the hands of the Romans, although he attributed a speech to Boudica, which he summarised in *Agricola*. In her speech, she exhorted her followers to rebel on the grounds that they were abused by the invaders. In a later speech attributed to Galgacus, Tacitus wrongly placed Boudica at the head of the Brigante tribe, having perhaps confused her with the Brigante queen, Cartismandua. The same mistake has been made on occasion in more recent years, almost certainly as a consequence of Tacitus's 2000-year-old mistake.

He corrected his error in the *Annals*, and provided a fuller narrative of Boudica's campaign against the occupiers during the reign of Emperor Nero. This account, written a few years after *Agricola*, told of Boudica's public mistreatment, as well as of her

[5] For an interesting discussion of Tacitus's work and the language he employed see F.S. L'Hoir, *Tragedy, rhetoric, and the historiography of Tacitus's Annales* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

daughters' torment and the enslavement of the royal family. Tacitus added further detail of omens seen in the town of Camulodunum, where the statue of the goddess Victory collapsed with no apparent cause. This occurred as the rebel armies rallied to Boudica and the greater goal of freeing the Britons from the insults of occupation. Again, before the final battle, Tacitus described Boudica as she delivered a moving speech to her troops, which Tacitus recorded in full in this instance. The end of the story was of course the same: Boudica was defeated and died by her own hand.

The only other written source for Boudica's actions from a period in some proximity to her own lifetime was the *Roman Histories* compiled by the Greek writer Cassius Dio in the second century AD. The books containing the history of Nero's reign did not survive in their original form. The account we have from Dio of Boudica's rebellion comes from the epitomes, or summaries, compiled by the eleventh-century monk John Xiphilinus.[6] But for simplicity's sake, I will refer to the work as Dio's.[7] Dio's version of events differed in some respects from Tacitus's, and these differences should be made clear at the outset because although Dio's history did not have the popularity that the works of Tacitus did in later periods, early modern writers sometimes combined Dio's account with Tacitus's. Later writers rarely chose only one source for Boudica, but they usually acknowledged where the Greek and Roman accounts differed.

First, and crucial for our later purposes, Dio recorded the role played by Seneca, Nero's tutor and later counsellor general, in the events that led up to Boudica's rebellion in Britain. It was Seneca, Dio wrote, who burdened the Britons with unwanted loans and

[6] J. Edmondson (ed), *Dio: the Julio-Claudians. Selections from books 58-63 of the Roman History* (London: London Association of Classical Teachers, 1992) 31.
[7] The version of Dio's text which I will use throughout is E. Cary (ed.), "Epitome of Book LXII", *Dio's Roman History* (London: William Heinemann, 1961) Vol. 8, pp. 83-105.

demanded repayment on impossible terms.[8] Dio added this to the Britons' grievances, although he acknowledged Boudica's suffering as the primary reason the Britons finally chose to rebel. Secondly, unlike Tacitus, Dio recorded the conduct of the Britons during their rebellion at great length and with much more extensive and often lurid detail. Dio's account of events in Britain had Boudica's troops butchering Roman mothers, murdering Roman infants, and engaging in all manner of looting, desecration, violence and rapine in the Roman-occupied towns.[9] Third, Dio had Boudica deliver a much longer, and more stirring speech to her troops. Tacitus's speech for Boudica consisted of a few moving sentences; Dio's speech for Boudica carried on for some one thousand words and was followed by a lengthy prayer to the goddess Andraste.[10] Suetonius Paulinus's speech was similarly lengthened, and also split into three parts as the Roman general gallops between his divisions, exhorting his troops to victory. Lastly, Dio attributed Boudica's death to sickness, not suicide, as Tacitus had.[11]

From these two surviving accounts by Tacitus and Dio, Boudica has somehow transformed into the heroic figure which the London County Council chose to memorialise on Westminster Bridge at the very end of the nineteenth century. Discovering the process which has led from the accounts by Tacitus and Dio, to the many written and non-written accounts of Boudica's story which have been produced in the years since could never be a simple endeavour. However, we can at least diminish the potential time span from two thousand years to a mere four hundred or so. This is because the relevant parts of Tacitus's works had been lost until five hundred years ago, and Boudica's story had been lost with them, or was at least so obscure as to have gone

[8] Dio, *Roman history*, 83.
[9] Dio, *Roman history*, 95.
[10] Dio, *Roman history*, 85-95.
[11] Dio, *Roman history*, 105.

unnoticed in Britain. Tacitus's recitation of Boudica's story was only rediscovered by Polydore Vergil when he came to write his *Anglica Historia* in 1534. Tacitus's importance in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries will be discussed at length in Chapter One, but suffice to say that the *Annals* was the most significant text in Boudica's history. Over the four hundred years since Polydore Vergil added Tacitus's account of Boudica's rebellion to his history of Britain, the character of Boudica has been variously restaged in chronicles, narrative histories, dramas, visual images, and public art. Given the extensive and varying images of Boudica, she must be treated as the subject and construct of something much greater than any discipline, whether archaeology, literature, or history – which of course were not "disciplines" in the modern sense until the nineteenth century. She lived at the outer chronological reaches of the recorded British past, yet she prevailed as a figure of interest, and even veneration, throughout nearly five centuries. She continues to garner attention in the first decades of the twenty-first century.

From its conception in its current version, this project was unlikely to have been conventional in its approach. One possible means of making the subject more manageable would have been to focus in on one aspect of Boudica's character, the most obvious being her femininity. After all, one could not be blamed for assuming that Boudica's femininity has long been one of the most striking aspects of her story for every generation of viewers. Boudica's identity as a woman cannot and should not be ignored, and we will have occasion to consider it at points throughout this thesis. There is much to be gained from seeing Boudica as a synecdoche for powerful women, but to undertake the project in that way would have meant ignoring all of the stimulating details of Boudica's posthumous life, in favour of forcing everything into a

chronological and conceptual framework that, while conventional, acceptable and, infinitely less demanding, could not have done justice to the subject's complexity. Neither would it have been so revealing in its potential implications for the study of the history of history, a subject in which, over the course of my initial research, I found myself unwittingly engaged. This study begins with the seventeenth century, a period in which the historical discipline did not exist in the way historians would recognise today. But some of the most important texts about Boudica to be written in the period would have defined themselves as "historical" works, and it was for that reason that the history of history supplanted a cultural history of femininity as my starting point.

Because she was a historical figure, it seemed natural to ask what historians had said about Boudica, and why they might have said it. But this was not a simple question – least of all because "historians" did not exist in the seventeenth century in the same way they do in the twenty-first, and because many of the works in which Boudica appeared were not straightforwardly "historical". Given Boudica's identity as "popular" historical character, or even a "myth", a term I will define below, perhaps it should not be at all surprising that she has been ignored by historians of history (or even historians generally). But I wish to suggest that there is much to learn from a case study of a "popular" historical figure whose reputation has been circulated in media beyond the written, academic work of a few serious scholars of history. As one recent study on the relationship between historical work and that of other disciplines concludes: "Given the huge importance of interlinkages between the different genres and their practitioners, both historians and scholars of literature, music, film, and the arts, need to study fictional, artistic, musical, visual, and historiographical representations of the national

past alongside each other."[12] The idea of nation and the national past will also form part of the discussion in this thesis. But we must begin by acknowledging that, in keeping with the words quoted above, the sources for this thesis will range from the various forms of academic, professional, or "serious" histories (chronicles, narrative histories, local studies) to plays (both performed and published), poems, images (including those which accompanied written histories), and sculpture.

As this spectrum of material suggests, I wish to acknowledge that the people who "make" history can be writers, artists, or any other producer of material that might be consumed as "historical". That is these materials would have been seen as relating a narrative from the past, rather than an entirely fictional narrative. Whether motivated by the demands of discipline, creative preference, commercial appeal, political concerns, ideology, or some combination of these impetuses, historical work can be performed and circulated outside the intellectualised historical discipline. As Ludmilla Jordanova has put it, remnants of the past were and are everywhere, whether part of a structured account, or as a constituent of a diffused awareness of the past within a community.[13] I have found it helpful to follow Jordanova in viewing "the past" as the content of "history", not synonymous with it, an approach which grants the two words very distinct meanings.[14] Similarly, J.H. Plumb saw "history" and "the past" as separate concepts, though I differ from Plumb in how to approach and employ them.[15]

I will begin this chapter by introducing the very large subject of the history of history. My aim in this thesis is to expand the remit of the history of history to

[12] S. Berger, "Introduction", in S. Berger, L. Eriksonas, and A. Mycock (eds), *Narrating the nation: representations in history, media, and the arts* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008) 10.
[13] L. Jordanova, *History in practice* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2006) 126.
[14] Jordanova, *History in practice*, 35.
[15] J. H. Plumb, *The death of the past* (London: Macmillan Press, 1969).

encompass what I have followed Daniel Woolf in calling "historical culture". This study of Boudica should be seen as something of a supplement to, or an extension of, the history of history, as well as being an investigation of "historical culture". Following a discussion of the historiography of history and historians, I will highlight some of the ways in which Boudica's story has been excavated by archaeologists, fictionalised by popular writers, and studied by scholars. Within the academy, it has been scholars of English literature who have given Boudica the most sustained attention, and these will be given extensive coverage in Part III; they will also act as points of reference throughout this work. These scholars have made excellent use of the many and varied sources which retell Boudica's story, but I have been very conscious that even while I use much of the same material, my own problems, readings and conclusions have been very different. Many of the studies produced by scholars of literature have demonstrated a prevailing tendency to view the many recapitulations of Boudica's story – whether in chronicles, plays, or poems – as articulating a gendered discourse of "early modern English nationalism".[16] My own views are very different, and will be made clear in the chapters which follow.

As this phrase "early modern" suggests, the weight of scholarship about Boudica is largely focused on her reputation in the period before about 1800, at the very latest. Her nineteenth-century image has not been studied in great depth. Therefore, I intend in my own study to push this conventional chronology forward to include the period up to 1916. It was in this year that the final statue of Boudica was erected in Cardiff.[17] Previous studies of Boudica and the approaches taken in those studies, as well as the

[16] J. Mikalachki, *The legacy of Boadicea: gender and nation in early modern England* (London: Routledge, 1998).
[17] Another statue of Boudica was erected in Colchester in the 1990s, but that is well beyond what can be considered here.

ways in which my own will differ, will be discussed in Part III below. After relating the ways one might approach a historical figure like Boudica – in a straightforwardly "literary" vein, or a straightforwardly "historical" one – I will move to an explanation of "historical culture" and the particular iterations it will take in this thesis.

Part II. Approaches to the history of history

For the most part, historians of history have viewed their subject as a sub-discipline of intellectual history.[18] The history of history has conventionally been done as the study of an elite body of scholars (usually male) which had access to educational resources that were not widely available to non-specialists, or whose work could be interpreted as

[18]F. Smith Fussner, *The Historical Revolution in English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962); T.P. Peardon, *The transition in English historical writing, 1760-1830* (New York; AMS Press, 1966 [First edition 1933]); F.J. Levy, *Tudor historical thought* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967); H. Butterfield, *Man on his past: a history of historical scholarship* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969.); J.W. Burrow, *A liberal descent: Victorian historians and the English past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); H.A. MacDougall, *Racial myth and English history: Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons* (Hanover, NH: Harvest House, 1982); A. D. Culler, *The Victorian mirror of history* (London: Yale University Press, 1985); J.M. Levine, *Humanism and history: origins of modern English historiography* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); C. Parker, *The English historical tradition since 1850* (Edinburgh: Donald, 1990); D.R. Woolf, *The idea of history in early Stuart England: erudition, ideology and the 'Light of Truth' from the accession of James I to the Civil War* (London: Toronto University Press, 1990); D.R. Kelley (ed), *Versions of history from antiquity to the Enlightenment* (London: Yale University Press, 1991); L. Okie, *Augustan historical writing: histories of England in the English Enlightenment* (Lanham: University Press of America) 1991); A. Brundage, *The people's historian: John Richard Green and the writing of history in Victorian Britain* (London: Greenwood Press, 1994); P. Hicks, *Neoclassical history and English culture: from Clarendon to Hume* (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1996); J.M. Levine, *The autonomy of history: truth and method from Erasmus to Gibbon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and religion, I-IV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999-2005); A. Patterson, *Nobody's perfect: a new Whig interpretation of history* (London: Yale University Press, 2002); M. Bentley, *Modernizing England's past: English historiography in the age of modernism, 1870-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

having contributed to a movement toward the modern idea of professionalised history.[19] The nineteenth century is held to be the starting point for the process that ultimately led to the professionalization of history.[20] There is no disputing that history became its own professional domain – with academics employed to practice and teach the subject – during that time. There will be some discussion of that process in Chapter Five of this thesis. What is important at this stage is to acknowledge that the history of history has been focused on an intellectual endeavour, and especially on the ways in which that intellectual endeavour came to be professionalised.

Kelley and Popkin see the Renaissance as the starting point for a form of understanding that would eventually lead to the creation of academic disciplines. It was in that period, they argue, that scholarly *eruditio* began to mould itself into the ordered system of arts and sciences, or disciplines, and, in time, to the academic departments and professionalised body of scholars with which students are familiar today.[21] But history and the past are complex subjects which have an appeal to a broad spectrum of people – perhaps interest in the past is even intrinsic to human nature. Emphasising the intellectual, even institutional, side of historical work can obscure the ways in which the past has been circulated before the professionalization of history, and the importance the past has outside intellectual activity. What might be called the "popular" (or accessible) history of past generations has been lost as historians of history have sought to explain

[19] P. Levine, *The amateur and the professional : antiquarians, historians and archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838-1886* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); R.N. Soffer, *Discipline and power: the university, history, and the making of an English elite, 1870-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).
[20] Some discussion of this can be found in Chapter Five.
[21] D.R. Kelley, R.H. Popkin (eds), *The shapes of knowledge from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer, 1991); D.R. Kelley (ed.), *History and the disciplines: the reclassification of knowledge in early modern Europe* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1997). But see also the discussion in Chapter One, and J. Levine, *The autonomy of history*, in which he sees the acknowledged divergence between fact and fiction as crucial to the development of "autonomous" history.

the origins and purpose of their discipline. Of course, doing so is entirely legitimate, not to mention extremely interesting, but also confining if one is interested to understand the relationship between, for example, history and national identity, or history and biography, beyond a theoretical understanding.

In taking this teleological view of the history of history, historians of history have understandably found that there is much to be gained from a focus on a canon of writers. This canon of works has exemplified the slow movement from what could be perceived as disorder and conjecture to order and evidentiary proof. The works of Camden, Selden, Coke, and later Gibbon and Hume, and historians such as E.A. Freeman in the Victoria period, have served as waypoints between the formative work of the seventeenth century and the later detached, impartial, "scientific" history of the nineteenth century, exemplified by Leopold von Ranke. Historians of history as a discipline have tended to see all that came before the advent of disciplinary professionalization as the painful but necessary birth pangs which would ultimately lead to "modern" historical practice.[22]

There have also been studies that have expand the horizons of history to a less canonical view and considered the ways in which the past was circulated outside of historical scholarship.[23] These works have recognised the importance of the past outside

[22] Keith Thomas's 1983 Creighton Trust Lecture "The perception of the past in early modern England" (London: University of London, 1983) expresses a typically dismissive view of early modern historians, although Thomas does acknowledge the importance of ballads, history plays, and other non-traditional forms of historical production in the circulation of knowledge about the past.
[23] A.B. Ferguson, *Clio unbound: perception of the social and cultural past in Renaissance England* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1979); D. Kelley and D. Sacks (eds), *The historical imagination in early modern Britain: history, rhetoric, and fiction, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); C. Parker, *The English idea of history from Coleridge to Collingwood* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); P. Kewes (ed), *The uses of history in early modern England*. (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 2006); B. Melman, *Culture of history: English uses of the past, 1800-1953* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); L. Howsam, *Past into print: the printing of history in Britain, 1850-1950* (London: British Library, 2009).

the boundaries of scholarship, but there are still many gaps to be filled. As Billie Melman has suggested, there is still a tendency to view the production of the past as a key "for something else".[24] I hope to address this issue in what follows, and perhaps begin to show how the past was appreciated as interesting and educational, but without necessarily being endlessly manipulated or politically "useful". In addition to such conceptual issues around the past, there are also gaps in our knowledge. For example, there has been only one in-depth study of "popular" histories published in Britain during the eighteenth century.[25] This is somewhat strange given the growing number of accessible histories which appeared during the period. But when one considers the overarching importance placed on the Enlightenment in intellectual histories of history, it is hardly surprising that the many hundreds of "hack"[26] histories produced in the eighteenth century should have gone relatively unnoticed by historians of history, while historians of the book have been more attuned to them. They were essentially commercial products, not enlightened works that could have presaged modern scholarship. Complicating matters, while adding further interesting aspects to the subject, others scholars have usefully investigated the relationship between history and fictional genres. This is particularly true of the historical novel. Such works ask what the relationship between "history" and "literature" might have been and what that relationship might tell us about the nature of fact and fiction in a given period.[27] By

[24] Melman, *Culture of history*, 10.
[25] K. O'Brien, "The history market", in I. Rivers (ed), *Books and their Readers in eighteenth-century England: new essays* (London: Continuum, 2003).
[26] This is how Jeremy Black has described them. See Black, "Ideology, history, xenophobia and the world of print in eighteenth-century England" in J. Black and J. Gregory (eds), *Culture, politics and society in Britain, 1660-1800* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 184-216, p. 207.
[27] C.A. Simmons, *Reversing the conquest: history and myth in nineteenth-century British literature* (London: Rutgers University Press, 1990); R. Mayer, *History and the early English novel: matters of fact from Bacon to Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); S. Fielitz and W.R. Keller (eds), *Literature as history/history as literature: fact and fiction in medieval to eighteenth-century British*

nature of their focus, these works are primarily concerned with written material. There are relatively few works which have focused on the past in visual culture in Britain.[28]

By looking at a body of sources for the history of history that goes beyond the traditional "canon" of historical writers, we can see that the past was interesting and important to people before professional history came into being, and that the "truth" of events – or people, such as our own case study, Boudica – could be related in works that fell outside of scholarly literature. Arguably, the pursuit of the "truth" behind a series of events or an individual life sets historical work apart from the production of fictions, and it is this emphasis on "truth" provable by factual evidence that became the hallmark of historical work in the nineteenth century.[29] But as those who study the relationship between history and literature might argue, "truth" and "true" events were and are the subject of other kinds of work. Long before the advent of professionalization, the study of the past was but one way in which the truth of human experience, human motive, human nature, and human failure could be revealed and understood.[30] The relation of true events, or embellished versions of them, can be found in work that is not by scholars of history. None of this material should be seen as wholly incompatible with historical work, or uninteresting to the historian of history. Rather it should be supplementary to it, and granted as equal footing to "scholarly history" because it has been crucial to the circulation of ideas about the past.

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literature (Frankfurt am Mein: Peter Lang Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2007); J. de Groot, *The historical novel* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010).

[28] R. Strong, *And when did you last see your father?: The Victorian painter and British history* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978); R. Mitchell, *Picturing the past: English history in text and image, 1830-1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[29] Culler, *Victorian mirror of history*.

[30] J.M. Levine, *The autonomy of history: truth and method from Erasmus to Gibbon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) ix. See also J.M. Levine, *Humanism and history: origins of modern English historiography* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987). For another lucid discussion of these issues, see Mayer, *History and the early English novel: matters of fact from Bacon to Defoe*.

Beyond the history of canonical historiography, and even beyond the relationship between history and the novel, we find other approaches to the study of the past's relationship to the present. The study of cultural memory is notable in this context because its practitioners are interested in understanding historical events through the eyes of ordinary people and the memories they produce, with individual psychological concepts, such as trauma, becoming part of historiographical parlance.[31] This widens the sphere of historical consciousness beyond "elites", and also blurs the boundaries between "high" and "low" understanding of past events, as well as of the boundary between the memories and the recorded facts of an event. As Lee Klein has put it, "Where we once spoke of folk history or popular history or oral history or public history or even myth we now employ memory as a metahistorical category that subsumes all these various terms."[32] There are some overlaps between this study of Boudica and the intellectual terrain covered by memory studies, especially in the emphasis that the latter has placed on the use of interdisciplinary sources (both "facts" and "memories") about the past. This has resulted in a broader understanding of historical consciousness which goes beyond the academic or scholarly – that is, again, a part of historical culture. Like "historical imagination", I do not find that "memory" or "cultural memory" are the best ways of understanding Boudica in this thesis.[33] Although she was not a forgotten heroine, her origins were (and continue to be) too alien – both in terms of chronology and character – to the present for her to be spoken of as a "memory." Additionally, the

[31] P. Nora, *Realms of memory: the construction of the French past* (Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1996).
[32] K. L. Klein, "On the emergence of memory in historical discourse", *Representations*. 69 (2000) 127-150, p. 128.
[33] "Historical imagination" of course has its origins in the work of Hayden White. White's *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) is of questionable utility to historians, but at its worst, it is obstructive. It has the potential to lend theoretical weight to ahistorical arguments. White's own reliance on canonical works of history to portray the "historical imagination" of an entire century and continent is only the most obvious problem.

body of information which the term "memory" encompasses is considered by many to be employable for the present as justification for those in power, a point of view with which I take issue.[34] Therefore I may draw on some of the same concepts, but I do not engage with memory studies in any substantial way. But beyond that, it seems to me that the idea of "memory" has lost what precision it may have had, and therefore its heuristic utility is limited.

Another key concept to engage with here is myth. The stories which have grown up around Boudica might be seen to resemble myths, albeit without the religious connotations that such phraseology might carry with it. The word "myth" has taken on the negative inference of fictional invention. "National histories" are increasingly seen as "myths" to be deconstructed by canny post-modernist critics.[35] I would like, at least in some measure, to rehabilitate the word, although its utility for this study is limited. Mary Lefkowitz has defined myths as, "…traditional stories, handed down from generation to generation, composed without resort to *historia* or inquiry. No one knows who created the myths, or exactly when they came into being. Mythical narratives described a distant past about which no one living could have any direct knowledge … Myths differ from fiction… because their plots cannot be significantly rewritten or altered. Like narratives obtained by inquiry or *historia*, their plots were known to many people in a wide geographic area … Writers of mythical narratives, such as epics and

[34] M. Lavabre, "Historiography and Memory" in A. Tucker (ed), *A companion to the philosophy of history and historiography* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2011) p. 365.
[35] C. Lorenz, "Drawing the line: 'scientific' history: between myth-making and myth-breaking" in S. Berger, L. Eriksonas, A. Mycock (eds), *Narrating the Nation: Representation in History, Media, and the Arts* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008) pp. 35-55. 46.

dramas, were free to give their own version of their characters' motives and to put words into their mouths."[36]

Lefkowitz's definition of a myth is a helpful reference point for the purposes of this work, if in a slightly reworked version. Boudica's historical factuality was accepted by later generations, so she was not "composed without resort to *historia*". But her origins in deepest antiquity and her subsequent ubiquity in British culture have served to obscure the exact mechanisms of her development as an individual character both within and out with the national narrative. However, this does not mean that she has been subject to cyclical recreation or wholesale reinvention in order to serve a series of successive presents. This is exactly the assumption which I argue against in this thesis.

Despite possessing qualities of a myth – by Lefkowitz's helpful definition – Boudica's story originated not in the ancient British writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth, but in the work of classical historians, many of whom were venerated far above their sixteenth-century equivalents.[37] The importance of her origins in the works of Tacitus cannot be overestimated, and it is because of these origins that Boudica should be considered "historical" rather than "mythical".[38] The broad arc of Boudica's story – from her victimization, to her outrage, to the uncontrolled violence of her rebellion, to her tragic end – could never be completely rewritten by chroniclers, academic

[36] M. Lefkowitz, "Historiography and myth" in A. Tucker (ed), *A companion to the philosophy of history and historiography* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2011) pp. 353-354.
[37] For the battle between the ancients and the moderns, see J.M Levine, *Between the ancients and the moderns: Baroque culture in Restoration in England* (London: Yale University Press, 1999). See also J.M. Levine, *The Battle of the Books: history and literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).
[38] Prior to Polydore Vergil's reintroduction of Tacitus's histories in the mid-sixteenth century, scholars had attributed the foundation of Britain to the Trojan exile Brutus. This story was embraced and retold by the Welsh monk, Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* written in the twelfth century. Geoffrey was also responsible for the introduction of King Arthur to the early history of Britain in the same work. For the King Arthur myth see S. Barczewski, *Myth and national identity in nineteenth-century Britain: the legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); I. Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur: the Arthurian legends in Victorian culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

historians, artists, or playwrights. Neither could they ignore the demands of authenticity[39] which engagement with Boudica's story necessitated. By this I mean that in circulating the idea of Boudica, creators of historical works have been forced to confront the entirety of her story, even the most distasteful aspects of it, and treat them as essentially unchangeable. Depending on the work in question, certain aspects of Boudica's story could be especially problematic. For example, biographers in the early nineteenth century had some difficulty reconciling Boudica's (justifiable) violence with the aims and intended audience of that genre: namely to instruct young women in appropriately feminine conduct. With very few exceptions, Boudica's "authenticity" was a constant which ruled out happy endings, but it is interesting to see how different authors and artists approached a story that remained essentially the same over time.

In the next section, I will switch from a focus on the history of history to the ways in which writers outside the historical discipline have engaged with Boudica's story in the recent past. Much of this discussion will be about studies produced by scholars of English literature, whose work on Boudica has far outstripped any produced by historians. After introducing and discussing those works, I will go on to explain my own approach to Boudica as an element of British history.

Part III. Recent approaches to Boudica

Aside from fictional portrayals[40] Boudica has aroused interest across an array of scholarly fields in recent years, notably archaeology. Archaeological studies that have

[39] I follow Anthony Smith in my use of this word. See discussion in section IV below.
[40] For example Manda Scott has recently written a series of four historical novels relating a highly embellished version of Boudica's life: *Dreaming the eagle* (2003), *Dreaming the bull* (2004), *Dreaming the hound* (2005), and *Dreaming the serpent spear* (2006) all published by Bantam Books. The children's

sought the "truth" about Boudica – the real site of her final battle and burial – have tended to be by experts in the Romano-British period. As one might expect, these works attempt to locate the "real" Boudica through fieldwork and analysis of Iron Age archaeological finds.[41] Recent archaeological accounts are useful for fleshing out Boudica's cultural and political backdrop with a degree of accuracy, but these are not aspects of her story with which this study is especially concerned, and it is for that reason that I will not engage at any length with archaeological accounts. The exception to this is the excavation of Hampstead Heath in 1894, when archaeological work both reflected and had direct bearing on popular ideas of Boudica within the confines of the chronology of this thesis. Antiquarianism, the practice some might name as the predecessor to archaeology,[42] will also come into this discussion at various points, but not as much as one might expect. Few antiquarian works focused on Boudica, for reasons which will be the subject of conjecture in later sections.

There have also been studies of Boudica which take neither a wholly fictional nor a wholly analytical approach. These combine the "real" Boudica revealed through archaeological excavation with descriptions of the process by which the mythologised Boudica was constructed in histories, images, and stories.[43] Most recently, the archaeologist Richard Hingley has combined his efforts with graphic designer Christina Unwin to co-write a study entitled, *Boudica: Iron Age Warrior Queen* (2005). Their

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novel *Boudicat* (2008) part of the Spartapuss Series by Robin Price, published by Mogzilla, is also worth mentioning here, if only to admire the title.

[41] G. Webster, *Boudica: the British revolt against Rome AD 60* (London: Routledge, 2000); M.J. Trow and T. Trow, *Boudicca: the Warrior Queen* (Stroud: Sutton, 2003); R. Hunt, *Queen Boudicca's Battle of Britain* (Staplehurst, Kent: Spellmount, 2003); M. Aldhouse-Green, *Boudica/Britannia* (London: Longmans, 2006).

[42] R. Sweet, *Antiquaries*: *the discovery of the past in eighteenth-century Britain* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004).

[43] Other examples in this vein are A. Fraser, *Warrior Queens: the legends and the lives of the women who have led their nations in war* (London: Phoenix, 2002); V. Collingridge. *Boudica: the life and legends of Britain's warrior queen* (London: Overlook, 2006).

work is divided into two halves. In the first half, the authors attempt to excavate the "real" Boudica from archaeological records and more recent finds; the second half of the book is something of whistle-stop tour of Boudica's reputation over time.[44] Richard Hingley's archaeological expertise makes the first half of this book educational, but the primary issue with the second half of Hingley and Unwin's book is that it does not demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the sources presented to the reader, or of the contexts in which the sources were produced. The resulting work seems somewhat perfunctory, although it does thoroughly catalogue Boudica's appearances in a large variety of media over a long period of time. However, this work does not provide much useful analysis. Hingley and Unwin are also reliant on recent works by literature scholars – notably by Jodi Mikalachki, discussed at some length below – for their interpretation of Boudica's in the early modern period. Similar problems are evident in the section on the nineteenth century, in which Hingley and Unwin contend that Boudica was an "imperial icon" for the British public. This claim is plausible, but there are reasons to be cautious in making too direct and strong a link between Boudica's image in the nineteenth century and the imperial project, or indeed between her image at any given time and any contemporaneous event.

Boudica's assumed importance as a symbol of imperial expansion in the nineteenth century is also evident in the account of her image presented by Sharon MacDonald in *Images of Women in Peace and War: cross-cultural and historical perspectives* (1987).[45] MacDonald's primary interest is not in Boudica, but in Boudica's womanhood and how it has been portrayed over time. MacDonald's essay is short and

[44] R. Hingley and C. Unwin, *Boudica: Iron Age Queen* (London: Hambledon and London: 2005).
[45] S. MacDonald, "Boadicea: Warrior, mother and myth" in S. MacDonald, P. Holden, and S. Ardener (eds), *Images of women in peace and war: cross-cultural and historical perspectives* (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1987) 40-55.

relatively sparing in its analysis (for example, it skips from Milton's *History of Britain* in the 1670s to William Cowper's famous poem *Boadicea: An Ode*, published in the 1780s). Arguably, MacDonald's study is overly reliant on the assumption that the only aspect of Boudica's character to which previous generations had reacted – or in which present-day historians might have interest – is her femininity and maternal identity. Marina Warner's similarly brief account in *Monuments and maidens: the allegory of the female form* (1985) also makes claims for the overarching importance of Boudica's sex, and for her identity as an imperial icon.[46] In addition, Warner views Boudica as a nineteenth-century innovation, and asserts that it was up to the Victorians to "rediscover" the ancient heroine and make her "a figurehead of righteous Britishness and glorious British might".[47] Like MacDonald, Warner shifts from Milton to Cowper in a single sentence, obscuring much that came between the two works. Both John Milton and William Cowper will have parts to play in what follows, and MacDonald and Warner cannot be faulted for placing such importance on those two works in the context of Boudica's circulation in British culture. But there were other works about Boudica that were of equal importance, some of which will be discussed in the following chapters. Nor should Warner and MacDonald be too heavily criticised for focusing on Boudica's femininity. After all, it remains the most striking aspect of her story, and the studies done by Warner and MacDonald were useful contributions to feminist historiography.

As has been noted above, scholars of English literature have given Boudica and her reputation thorough consideration. The most recent full-length work about Boudica

[46] M. Warner, *Monuments and maidens: The allegory of the female form* (London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, 1985) 49-51.
[47] Warner, *Monuments and maidens*, 51.

in this field is Carolyn D. Williams's *Boudica and her stories* (2009).[48] Unlike Hingley and Unwin's *Boudica: Iron Age Queen*, or MacDonald's *Images of women in peace and war*, both of which included discussions of images and some (but not all) of the nineteenth-century sculptures of Boudica, as well as the written work in which she was portrayed, Carolyn D. Williams confines her study to written material only. She makes thorough use of digital copies of rare or previously elusive works, many of which were not available to Sharon MacDonald in the 1980s. But Williams's account of Boudica is similar to previous studies in that it is very much like a catalogue, albeit one with a more exhaustive source base of textual material. Williams's work is undoubtedly ambitious in scope, but it attempts to be too exhaustive in its recitation of the sources. It would be an almost impossible task to contextualise fully every mention of Boudica for almost five hundred years; certainly impossible in a book of barely more than two hundred pages. This means that rather than digging deeply around key works to discover the context in which they were created, Williams seeks to place each reference to Boudica into a thematic organisation, often without regard for context. Her chapters focus on how different works could be interpreted to reveal intimations of British national identity, domesticity, even the appearance of "Boudica's body". One cannot help but get the impression that the author's thesis was developed without any serious engagement with the primary material. In some ways this approach is satisfying for the reader because Boudica's disparate and confusing source base is neatly packaged and presented. But this presentation also leaves much undone in Boudica's case.

The strength of Williams's work is that it moves beyond seeing Boudica as a cipher for women and engages with other facets of her character. This sets Williams's

[48] C. D. Williams, *Boudica and her stories: narrative transformations of a warrior queen* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009).

recent work apart from that of other scholars, in which the prevailing assumption is that Boudica's femininity was the most decisive – and consistently problematic – factor in her posthumous reception. As mentioned above, such scholarship mostly focuses on the early modern period, and contends that Boudica was constructed as a post-Elizabethan villain during the reign of James I. The reasons for this near-exclusive focus on the period before 1700 are difficult to determine with certainty. The pertinent fact is that most studies of Boudica – certainly those of any significant length – have focused on a relatively short period, and have fed into a particular conceptual framework. This framework formulates Boudica as an example of female resistance against a patriarchal impulse to dominate and control the dangerous female savage, much of which played out in texts written before 1700.

Despite some intermittent scholarly interest in her reputation, we can hardly characterise the scholarly literature about Boudica (outside archaeological studies) as vast. Given the relative lack of scholarship about Boudica's posthumous life, it seems both necessary and informative to focus on two of the most recent, lengthy and conceptually-driven works about Boudica's reputation and its significance in post-Elizabethan England. I will also discuss some shorter pieces that have taken a similar viewpoint to that evident in the two larger works. I hope to demonstrate the pervasiveness, but also the inadequacy, of the view that Boudica's reputation can reveal little beyond English[49] society's distrust of women. This point of view is best demonstrated by the work of Jodi Mikalachki, whose study of Boudica in the period between the death of Elizabeth and the reign of James I proceeds from a particular conception of how gender difference and national character were perceived in the early

[49] I hope to move beyond this "English" focus. Boudica's significance in Wales will be discussed in Chapter Five.

modern period. In *The legacy of Boadicea: gender and nation in early modern England* (1998) Jodi Mikalachki constructs a portrait of Boudica as primarily a synecdoche for the problems presented by femininity and female power during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. She argues that representations of Boudica in early modern media can be consistently and most productively understood as reflecting contemporary attitudes to women, and that it is possible to lay bare the "masculine anxiety" evident in the works of early modern historical writers.[50] In Mikalachki's view, Boudica forced historical writers – here the author focuses on Raphael Holinshed, whose *Chronicles* appeared in 1577, and William Camden's *Britannia* of 1586 in particular – to confront their own anxieties about the place of women in early modern English society, and the tenuousness of masculine authority in the face of what was thought to be the growth of female power. Mikalachki argues that the early narrators of history in Britain were forced against their will to confront their own nation's "savage past" in which women such as Boudica (other examples might include Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes, and Cordelia, made famous in Shakespeare's *King Lear*) wielded a menacing power over their subjects, both male and female, and jeopardised the natural patriarchy of the state, represented by the invading Romans. As Mikalachki puts it, "One woman in particular threatened this foundation of the modern nation in Roman Britain...as a martial and outspoken woman, exercising independent female sovereignty even as she [Boudica] threatened Britain's ancient membership in the Roman Empire, she was not

[50] J. Mikalachki, *The legacy of Boadicea: gender and nation in early modern England* (London: Routledge, 1998). See also J. Crawford, "'*The Tragedie of Bonduca*' and the anxieties of the masculine government of James I", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, (1999) 357-381.

easily incorporated into nationalist historiography by those seeking to establish a civilized, masculine foundation for the early modern nation."[51]

The idea that Boudica was a "problem" for early modern writers is not subjected to scrutiny at any point in the course of Mikalachki's study; it is assumed and then described to the reader, but the premise is never interrogated. According to Mikalachki, the end of Elizabeth's reign and the accession of James I only hastened the "domestication of the savage queen". Like Carolyn D. Williams, Mikalachki makes no distinction between works by early modern historical writers who were concerned, at least in some degree, with accurate recitation of facts as best they could be determined (this will be discussed at length in the first chapter of this thesis), and the dramatic works by writers like Shakespeare. Her approach to her sources can appear somewhat obtuse at points. For example, she insists that William Camden's account of the Boudica story was written in the first person because Camden self-identified with the Roman conqueror.[52] This was not likely to have been the case. In fact, Camden recited the entirety of Tacitus's account in direct quotation and in inverted commas, a common practice in works of the period.

Mikalachki's account is flawed in many ways, but it has become the basis for other readings of Boudica's reputation in the early modern period. For example, Willy Maley applies Mikalachki's thesis to the work of John Milton. Maley argues that Milton's approach to Boudica in his *History of Britain* was indicative of the writer's distaste for female rule, not his general distrust of ancient British history and the scanty,

[51] Mikalachki, *Legacy of Boadicea*, 119.
[52] Mikalachki, *Legacy of Boadicea*, 121.

"Romish" (or Roman) sources on which an account was by necessity based.[53] In truth, it is difficult, impossible even, to disaggregate Milton's simultaneous disgust at the idea of monarchy, particularly of a female monarch, and his suspicion that any account of ancient British history must by necessity be based on questionable evidence. My own point of view is that Milton was as zealous in his historical practice as he was in his politics, and the absence of any evidentiary certainty, especially in the form of written accounts made by the Britons, acted to discourage him from engaging with Boudica on anything more than a reactionary level. We will have reason to return to Milton's *History* in Chapter Two, but the divergence between Willy Maley's reading and my own gives some initial indication of the complexities hidden in early modern historical literature, as well as Boudica's place in it.

There is little evidence to support the straightforward conclusion that there was a widespread distaste for the ancient queen Boudica during the early modern period. That literary scholars have to taken the opposite conclusion as read is unfortunate, but the accounts by Mikalachki and others are also helpful as foundational works which give full recapitulations of Boudica's re-emergence in British history after the *Anglica Historia*. The most recent scholarly work about Boudica's significance in the period up to 1625 is somewhat more nuanced in its approach to its sources than Mikalachki was. In some ways, Samantha Frénée-Hutchins's unpublished doctoral thesis of 2009 acts as a partial corrective to Mikalachki's book published ten years earlier.[54] Frénée-Hutchins

[53] W. Maley, "That Fatal Boadicea': depicting women in Milton's *History of Britain*, 1670" in D. Loewenstein and P. Stevens (eds), *Early Modern Nationalism and Milton's England* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2008) 305-330, p. 321. For an alternative reading of Milton's *History* see J.E. Curran, *Roman invasions: the British history, Protestant anti-Romanism, and the historical imagination in England, 1530-1660* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002).

[54] S. Frénée-Hutchins, "The cultural and ideological significance of representations of Boudica during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I", Unpublished D.Phil thesis. (Exeter University and Universite d'Orleans, 2009).

makes some steps towards explaining and exploring the multiplicity of genres that constituted the idea of history during the period up to the end of James I's reign in 1625. As I do, she takes inspiration and instruction from the work of Daniel Woolf (discussed in the next section). By contrast, Jodi Mikalachki had not attempted to come to grips with the intellectual climate of the period she chose to discuss. As a result, Mikalachki avoided having to engage with the fraught relationship between the "facts" of history and the fictionalised accounts of Boudica's story. The strength of Frénée-Hutchins's work is that she acknowledges that "history" was a complex and multifariously constituted concept in the period before modern understanding of history as a professionalised discipline. But despite this awareness, and many references to the work of Daniel Woolf, Frénée-Hutchins goes on to make an overly simplistic distinction between the aims of history, which she sees as "didactic", and literature. "If the didactic nature of history showed the devastating effects of female leadership, the literary texts firmly advocated the need to tame the wild heart of women."[55] This is a partial echo of Mikalachki's conclusion that there were "discrepancies between [Boudica's] universal condemnation by historians in the period and an incipient if limited literary tradition of praise."[56]

I suggested above that "history" and "literature" should be considered part of "historical culture" because historical and fictional works have both contributed to forming perceptions of the past, and perceptions of Boudica in particular. But this does not mean that we should ignore the very different motivations behind the production of "history" and "fiction" in a given period. The trouble lies in the assumption that the sole reason for writing history during the seventeenth century was to condemn or praise the

[55] Frénée-Hutchins, "Representations", 23.
[56] Mikalachki, *Legacy of Boadicea*, 118.

subject at hand – in this case Boudica. Both Mikalachki and Frénée-Hutchins seem to view the "historians" they discuss as jealous guardians of the past, and the past itself as an inventory maintained and mined by elites, and refashioned to legitimise and perpetuate the hegemony of the rulers over the ruled. Frénée-Hutchins argues for the "deployment" of Boudica in the early modern period, asserting that the ancient warrior queen was a tool used by the supporters of James I to attack the memory of Elizabeth I, and denigrate the idea of female leadership by doing so. Similarly, Jodi Mikalachki argues that the "verdict" among early modern writers was unanimous: Boudica was condemned both for her savagery and her femininity – the two characteristics had by then become one.[57] Despite demonstrating a nuanced understanding of the state of historical production in the early modern period, Samantha Frénée-Hutchins's conclusion is identical to Mikalachki's. Both these authors assumed that historical writers in the period were more concerned with shoring up the present against the past than they were with excavating that past and attempting to understand it. This is not to say that the former was not a concern, but it would be overstating the case to argue that, in the seventeenth century (or perhaps even any period), the study of the past existed only for the sake and service of the present. The first chapter of this thesis argues that ideology and polemic could be combined with antiquarianism and a Tacitean historical approach without compromising the integrity of historical practice. In fact one might argue that the interaction between these things is in part what characterised historical culture in the period.

Aside from "histories", both Mikalachki and Frénée-Hutchins also discuss the staged dramas in which Boudica (that is, an imagined version of her) appeared in the

[57] Mikalachki, *Legacy of Boadicea*, 115.

early seventeenth century. It could be argued that throughout the earlier part of the period covered in this thesis, dramas play the most crucial role in circulating Boudica's story and maintaining her reputation in the public imagination. Dramatic productions about Boudica were numerous enough for Wendy Nielsen to have made a study of the ancient queen's representation on stage before the turn of the nineteenth century. Nielsen's is one of the only studies to explore the eighteenth-century idea of Boudica, albeit in only one of its forms.[58] Nielsen suggests that Boudica's status as a "national institution" is questionable in the period before 1800 because none of the dramas in which she appeared during that time achieved what Nielsen considers to be "lasting success".[59] Again, while helpful as a foundational work on Boudica's eighteenth-century reputation, Nielsen's study is too narrowly focused on the plays themselves and how their content might be read as revealing contemporary attitudes to women, especially in military conflicts. Nielsen's assessment of Boudica's significance in the period between 1600-1800 is based solely on the plays in which the character appeared, and she does not compare or contrast these portrayals with others from the period. It also seems problematic that she does not give a definition of "lasting success", or inform the reader whether she means to argue that this was a failure unique to plays with unsympathetic heroines. It would seem that the pertinent fact remained: that playwrights consistently returned to Boudica as a subject. Perhaps this was in itself indicative of some measure of success.

There are, of course, problems to be found in the works discussed above, but scholars of early modern literature have acknowledged the presence of Boudica in the

[58] W.C. Nielsen, "Boadicea on stage before 1800: a theatrical and colonial history" *SEL*, 49:3. (2009) 595-614.
[59] Nielsen, "Boadicea on stage", 596. This is a conclusion she extrapolates to Boudica's reputation up to 1800.

cultural, if not specifically the intellectual and historical, discourses of the period. In large part they have done this in the period before 1800. With the exception of parts of Wendy Nielsen's article and of Sharon MacDonald's and Marina Warner's very short essays, there has yet to be much scholarly interest in the eighteenth- or nineteenth-century Boudicas. None of the works described above locate Boudica in a discussion of the history of history. Simultaneously, historians of history have for the most part ignored sources that fall outside a small canon of "great" works of history. Thus Boudica has fallen into a fissure between literary scholarship, with its focus on the early modern period and its fixation on gendered discourse, and the history of historical thought, which privileges the intellectual currents of historical scholarship over the popular understanding of historical culture. In the next section, I will attempt to explain what I mean by "historical culture", and how the concept can be of use in this study of Boudica.

Part IV. A new approach: historical culture

The phrase "historical culture" has been used by historians previously, but it is not often investigated or defined. Some historians of the nineteenth century, such as Billie Melman and Rosemary Mitchell, have used the term to explain their approach to a multimedia source base that includes images and objects, in addition to the traditional written sources of historians of history. That the idea of "historical culture" is most often employed in studies of the nineteenth century is not surprising given that this was the period during which all forms of popular culture – historical and otherwise – grew

as a result of increased living standards and greater individual choice.[60] Perhaps historians of the nineteenth century assume that the phrase does not require definition given the period's milieu of popular culture. However, the phrase "historical culture" is also used by historians of the early modern period. A chronological boundary has been crossed here, although this has yet to be noted by either early modernists or modernists. But given the utility of the term in the scholarship of both periods, it is seems a fitting means of linking the "historical culture" of the nineteenth century and with the "historical culture" of the seventeenth century.

The most thoroughly articulated definition of "historical culture" has come from the early modernist Daniel Woolf. Woolf explained that historical culture is, "a convenient shorthand for the perceptual and cognitive matrix of relations among past, present, and future, a matrix that gives rise to, nurtures, and is in turn influenced by the formal historical writing of that era, but that also manifests itself in other ways, including many that look decidedly suspicious from the point of view of modern historical method."[61] What Woolf called "formal historical writing" did not exist in a vacuum, cut off from other methods of relating past events, but rather formed part of a culture in which ideas circulated freely between "formal" and "informal", scholarly and popular, written and unwritten.

Woolf provided an expanded definition of historical culture as "…the complete matrix of relations between past, present and future including but not limited to writing, that includes elite and popular, narrative and non-narrative modes of representing the

[60] J.M. Golby and A.W. Purdue, *The civilisation of the crowd: popular culture in England, 1750-1900* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999) 12.
[61] D.R. Woolf, "Little Crosby and the horizons of early modern historical culture" in D.R. Kelley and D.H. Sacks (eds), *The historical imagination in early modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 93-132, p. 94.

past…and that, even more importantly, is subject to social and commercial forces that, as much as the traditionally-studied intellectual influences, conditioned the way in which the early modern mind thought, read, and wrote about the past."[62] Here Woolf expanded his definition of historical culture explicitly to include the multimedia source base which has been employed by historians of nineteenth-century historical culture. But this shows that historians of history (or historical culture) must reject the assumption that a popular historical culture only became evident in the nineteenth century (see Chapter Four). Historical culture encourages us to look beyond conventional periodisation for evidence of popular engagement with the past. Woolf also suggests that historians of history should reject the idea that shifts in historical production were purely the result of intellectual impetuses. Historical production was not only an intellectual endeavour, but also motivated by the popular demand for, to give but a few examples, history plays in the seventeenth century, cheap national histories in the eighteenth century, and historical pageantry in the late nineteenth century. Woolf's expanded definition pointed to the importance of what he called social and commercial forces in the changing nature of historical production, specifically in the early modern period. But these shifts are also evident in later periods. Arguably, shifts in social and commercial forces – for example, an audience's changing age and gender demographic – are far more significant factors in the rise and fall of certain manifestations of historical culture than shifts in intellectual or ideological forces. The demise of the seventeenth-century chronicle, the rise of illustrated histories, and the emergence of biography all reflect changes in commercial and social forces as much as

[62] D.R. Woolf, "Disciplinary history and historical culture: a critique of the history of history: the case of early modern England" *Chromohs,* 2 (1997) p. 2. [http://www.cromohs.unifi.it/2_97/woolf.html] Accessed 12 October 2011.

they reflect new intellectual trends. Certainly, the intellectual inheritance of Renaissance humanism touched only a relatively small number of scholars and learned men, and this is not to say that historical writers such as David Hume were unconcerned with the ideological implications of their work. Yet they were equally concerned with how their works would fare in what Karen O'Brien has called the "history market", a market that grew throughout the eighteenth century.[63]

In the same piece, Woolf made the provocative statement that, "what is often called 'the 1066 and all that' view of English history had to come from somewhere."[64] I attempt in this thesis to show that one element of the "1066 and all that view" of history – Boudica – is the result of a prolonged and enduring interaction between an enormous corpus of cultural products, the producers of which might have adhered to different sets of methodological boundaries and expectations, but all of whom shared a common investment in, and all of whom took inspiration from, the past. When conceived of in this way, the history of history is the history of an idea; it defies the strictures of discipline and demands that its practitioners forge connections between disparate spheres of knowledge or ways of understanding over a prolonged period.[65]

This has led Jörn Rusen to argue that history should be seen as a specific "field of culture".[66] "I follow Jörn Rusen in arguing that "history" is not straightforwardly a genre, a discipline, or a subject for scholarly study without implications for laypeople. "Historical culture" is a phrase we can use to refer to that body of cultural products –

[63] K. O'Brien, "The history market", in I. Rivers (ed.), *Books and their readers in eighteenth-century England: new essays* (London: Continuum, 2003).
[64] Woolf, "Disciplinary history", 19.
[65] B. Southgate, "Intellectual history/history of ideas" in S. Berger, H. Feldner, K. Passmore (eds), *Writing history: theory and practice* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2003) 243.
[66] "Preface to the Series", J. Rusen (ed.), *Meaning and Representation in History. Making Sense of History, Vol 7,* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006).

publications, performances, images, public artworks, etc. – for which there is no consistent framework of understanding expect that the past, or a particular element of it, is the inspiration for their production. These various cultural products communicate and fragment – combine and diverge – to form an imagined vision of the national or local past which can be widely held, but not necessarily deeply understood. The best way of demonstrating this process is through a case study, and Boudica makes a particularly interesting subject.

As has been touched on above, a primary argument of this thesis is that the image each generation had of Boudica was influenced by that of preceding generations, and not solely the product of a preoccupation with contemporary concerns. I do not believe that the "usefulness" of Boudica for articulating or combating contemporary problems was the sole reason she remained a fixture of British historical culture. The past was not epiphenomenal to the present. There are those who contend that, "History is not a settled record of the dead past, but a poetic or imaginative creation stimulated by and focused on contemporary interests."[67] Such a position is not unlike that taken by J.H. Plumb, who in 1969 stated bluntly that, "The past is always a created ideology with a purpose, designed to control individuals, or motivate societies, or inspire classes. Nothing has been so corruptly used as concepts of the past. The future of history and historians is to cleanse the story of mankind from those deceiving visions of a purposeful past." [68] More recently, Maria Grever has said of national historical narratives: "The self-proclaimed aim of such a [national historical] canon is to guarantee

[67] E.E. Jacobitti, "Introduction" in *Composing useful pasts: history as contemporary politics* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000).
[68] J. H. Plumb. *The death of the past*, 17.

the transmission of a specific body of historical knowledge and so to contribute to social cohesion."[69]

That the past has the power to bring coherence to the present, but that the past requires the present to manipulate that power, is a view shared by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in their collection of essays, *The Invention of Tradition* (1983). The argument that much of what we understand as "the past" in Britain is merely an invention created by embattled elites during the fast-changing nineteenth century has been a seminal one, and its effects have been widespread in historiographical debate.[70] In this view, "elites" are seen as the custodians of the past; they dispense (or invent) useful elements of that past in times of change as a way of providing ordinary people with a shared understanding of their past. This shared understanding acts to bind them to one another, and contribute to a shared national or local identity. This particularly fraught relationship between the past and national identity will form some part in the ensuing chapters.

But first, we would do well to turn our attention to one of the most cogent statements yet made against the "invention of tradition" paradigm, from J.G.A. Pocock:

> The invention of tradition is a phrase that encourages us to find an original set of inventors, specify their intentions or motives and the circumstances or context in which they acted, and to suppose that we have thereby reduced the 'tradition' to historicity. So, it may turn out, we have: but we may need also to enquire what relations existed between the inventors and other members of their society who may have been involved in the action, and we need to enquire whether the invention was indeed instantaneous or took place over time. The longer it takes to 'invent' a 'tradition', the more will the words 'invention' and 'tradition' become interchangeable...[71]

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[69] M. Grever, "Plurality, Narrative and the historical canon" in M Grever and S. Stuurman (eds), *Beyond the canon: history for the twenty-first century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) pp. 40-41.
[70] E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (London: Canto, 1983).
[71] J.G.A. Pocock, *Political thought and history: essays on theory and method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) p. 221.

My own work is in keeping with Pocock's objections. Part of my ambition for this thesis is to dissect a tradition: to expose it and to understand as fully as possible its internal workings. I wish to trace it to the moment of its "invention", but doing so will reveal that in fact there was no one moment, no single body of inventors, and above all, no conspiracy to deploy and redeploy Boudica in successive presents. While "tradition" and "invention" might be opposed in a commonsensical way – a verbal subversion of which Hobsbawm and Ranger were certainly aware – Pocock is correct to say that the two words become essentially interchangeable given enough time. I employ the *longue durée* to show that this is the case. Part of the reasoning behind this thesis is to show that Boudica is not and never was an invented tradition, but rather a tradition without a moment of invention. Boudica's significance may have manifested itself differently in different periods, and it may even have come into service to persuade, but for her story to speak to present issues required an audience with an accumulated knowledge of the past. In the case of Boudica, she was and is seen as an "authentic" part of the past, whether she was being circulated in a narrative history or a popular drama.

Here I follow Anthony Smith in arguing that authenticity is key to a historical narrative's potential utility in the present.[72] However, I question the extent to which pasts can be "used". According to Smith, "…the task of the nationalist historian and archaeologist is to recover each layer of the past and thereby trace the origins of the nation from its 'rudimentary beginnings'… In this way the myth receives apparent historical self-confirmation over the *longue durée*, and a rediscovered and authenticated

[72] A. Smith, *The nation in history: historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000). See also S.J. Mock, *Symbols of defeat in the construction of national identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) 21ff.

past is 'scientifically' appropriated for present national ends."[73] Smith is certainly correct that it is paramount that a narrative of the past must be perceived as authentic if it is to be accepted as part of the national story and recognised in the present as such. But he undermines this importance by implying that only professionals are capable of "authenticating" the past, and thus it is unclear how the past circulated before the advent of the historical discipline. Even the process of recovery and "authentication" is thus open to accusations of invention.

Instead this thesis argues that the *perception* of authenticity is of paramount importance, and that by tracing Boudica in historical culture over the *longue durée*, we can see that a version of the past – exemplified here by Boudica – which was accepted and acknowledged as authentic had been handed down long before the profession, or even the discipline of history became established. No "scientific appropriation" was necessary in Boudica's case because she had been so well-established in the national narrative prior to the nineteenth century. I also differ from Smith in that I do not focus on the idea of nationalism, nor do I intend to touch on discussions of ethnicity as the organising principle behind national identity, as he has done.[74] Instead I argue that, if anything, historical culture has been crucial in the formation and circulation of British national identity. This might have implications for the conventional chronology of "Britishness" established by Linda Colley (see Chapter Three below).[75]

[73] Smith, *The nation in history*, 64.
[74] Colin Kidd has argued very convincingly that ethnicity was less significant in early modern political culture and understandings of national identity than Smith's assessment allows. Kidd emphasises the importance of institutions and their development. See C. Kidd, *British identities before nationalism: ethnicity and nationhood in the Atlantic World, c. 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[75] L. Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707-1837* (London: Yale University Press, 1992).

Part V. Organisation

The organisation of this thesis will follow a rough chronology from the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. Each chapter is intended to provide readings of the particular aspects of historical culture that Boudica's story can reveal. I intend these readings to be as deeply contextualised as possible in the period in question, and wherever possible, I have tried to be guided by the sources rather than by the themes I had hoped (or assumed) I might find in a given period. The first chapter is partially intended as a further introduction to the origins of Boudica's story – not the evidence behind the woman herself, but rather how she came to be known to people in the seventeenth century, and thus to later generations. As noted above, previous scholars have argued that Boudica was "deployed" during the Jacobean struggle against domination by women, and then disappeared from discussion when she lost her usefulness, (an argument not without some similarity to the nineteenth-century "invention of tradition"). But I argue that Boudica's origins in classical writing, and especially her connection to Tacitus, was of the utmost importance for contemporaries, whose world was very much focused on the ancients. A simple equation of Boudica with Elizabeth I is not sufficient. While contemporary fictionalised accounts of Boudica will have some part in the discussion, it is important to stress that interest in Boudica emerged from a contemporary intellectual current of political thought, namely Neostoicism. Thus the first chapter lays the foundation for an understanding of Boudica that delves deeper into contemporary discourse. It also foregrounds the idea that Boudica's importance to the political discourse of the Jacobean period was predicated on her "authenticity", or at least her *perceived* authenticity. This is an aspect of her story in this period which literary scholars have overlooked. Chapter One also introduces the

idea that the seventeenth century saw an emerging popular interest in Boudica, and in the national past in general.[76] This is evidenced by the enthusiasm for history plays and collections of portraits of worthy women (and men) from the past. These elements of historical culture existed beyond the antiquarian/historical writings on which historians of seventeenth-century history have focused, and they also fall outside the remit of literary scholars because some such works take a more neutral stance than scholars of literature have argued previously.

The second chapter follows the thread of historical culture through the first half of the eighteenth century by exploring the growing popularity of panoramic national histories, and the sentimental, accessible language found in early examples. I argue that these histories are one of the most obvious, but also the most overlooked means by which Boudica's story would have been circulated, albeit as part of a lengthy national narrative. Literary scholars have argued that Boudica faded away from contemporary discourse as the seventeenth century wore on, and others have tried to show that when Boudica was not ignored, she was seen as a villain, especially in theatrical productions, a form of historical culture which is especially significant in the periods covered in Chapters One through Three. In contrast with those conclusions, I argue that historical culture had changed dramatically by the beginning of the eighteenth century, and far

[76]Recent studies of popular national pasts have taken the form of collections of essays that focus on "popular national narratives" from multiple European countries, beginning from 1800. See B. Korte and S. Paletschek (eds.). *Popular history now and then: international perspectives*. (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2012); S. Berger, C. Lorenz, B. Melman (eds.). *Popularizing national pasts: 1800 to the present.* (New York: Routledge, 2012). Arguably, there are problems with this approach. First, 1800 seems an arbitrary starting point for any study of the "popular national narrative" given its growing importance in the first half of the eighteenth century, and even earlier, in Britain. This is leaving aside questions about how that chronological framework might map onto other nations' narratives of their respective national pasts. Second, there is little explanatory purpose behind grouping together short essays on disparate national historical cultures; doing so sheds little light on either the concept of historical culture itself or on particular national traditions. Rather, it seems comparative studies have preceded the necessary formative work that makes fruitful comparison possible.

from fading away or being shunned, Boudica's story simply reflected that change. Boudica's story appeared in dozens of the panoramic, longue-durée, national histories that were gradually growing in popularity. This is especially evident when we see how the language in which Boudica's story was told became more sentimentalised and sensationalised. Arguably, this was an indication that authors were attempting to reach a wider audience with their national histories. Boudica's appearance in the early part of the eighteenth century reflects a growing commercial interest in the past, and a particular authorial and editorial response to that demand, not a fundamental shift in attitudes about women.

Chapter Three moves us into the latter half of the eighteenth century and expands on the ways in which Boudica could be perceived as a patriot. This characteristic had been established in the national narratives of the earlier part of the century. Her perceived patriotism carried her from the published history book to other, even more public and accessible realms of historical culture. In particular, I will focus on the play *Boadicia* written by Richard Glover in 1753, in which the example of Boudica's rebellion became a Bolingbrokean warning against the dangers of factionalism. Attention will also be on what the contemporary commentary surrounding the play might show us about Boudica's position in the popular imagination of the period. I will again argue that the assumptions made by literary scholars can be misleading. Chapter Three will also broaden out into discussions of music and images. Boudica's influence on popular song in the period has not been explored before, and it is this aspect of her story that I will focus on in the latter half of Chapter Three. I will also engage to some degree with Boudica's relationship to heroism and British national identity at this stage.

Chapter Four covers the first half of the nineteenth century, and follows on some of the ideas found in Chapter Two. I argue that by the early nineteenth century, Boudica had become a subject whose internal life and emotional struggles were gold dust for the writer of popular historical work, especially that with a moral message. Biography, periodicals, poems, and plays will all play some role in the discussion. In this chapter, I will discuss how writers whose intent was primarily instructive dealt with the savagery of the ancient queen, especially in works aimed at young women. It also shows how the sentimentality of the historical works discussed in Chapter Two continued to be evident in the nineteenth century. Themes discussed in previous chapters, such as Boudica's patriotism, will also be explored further in Chapter Four.

The final chapter focuses on the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. That was the period in which the first statues of Boudica were erected. I will explore what these statues can tell us about the past and national identity, and argue that, in Boudica's case, the woman whom some have seen as an "imperial icon" was in fact a local icon – for London, Colchester, and Cardiff in particular. This is also demonstrated by Boudica's presence in local historical pageants, an important, if overlooked, element of the historical culture of later nineteenth century. Much of Chapter Five is devoted to a discussion of Boudica's place in a particularly Welsh historical culture. Especially important here will be the idea that histories must be thought of as authentic in order to have any meaning at all to national identity.

Chapter One

Fact, fiction and historical culture in the seventeenth century

During much of the period covered in this thesis, "historical culture" acts as a phrase capable of referring to all the different forms of media and genres in which the past was at work: that is, text or image, historical narrative or fictional drama. However, this first chapter about the period immediately after Boudica's sixteenth-century rediscovery in Tacitus's works differs slightly in that it is largely focused on the intellectual currents that constituted the idea of "history" in a period before the emergence of the disciplinary structure recognisable today. This is because the main text on which this chapter will focus is Edmund Bolton's *Nero Caesar, or Monarchie Depraved* (1624). Bolton's book was intended to be a "historical worke", according to its author, and while I do not intend to treat "history" and "literature" as oppositional or incompatible, it seems important to distinguish between the fictionalised version of Boudica in drama (such as John Fletcher's *Bonduca*), the "popular" idea of Boudica found in Thomas Heywood's *Exemplary Lives* (1640), and Bolton's "historical" endeavour.

More than any other period discussed in this thesis, the years between the end of the sixteenth century and the middle to late seventeenth century reveal the diachronic nature of the currents of thought that merged and emerged to form the autonomous field of study that we now call "history". Far from being rigidly distinguished from each other, politics, philosophy, and antiquarianism were practiced as constituent parts of a

humanist programme of knowledge accumulation and creative production.[77] History, or more particularly its subject matter, the past, flowed through these semi-permeable spheres of knowledge. As Daniel Woolf has shown, this was a period in which there was "a growing understanding of formal boundaries between genres but also of the liquidity of historical matter and its capacity to transcend such boundaries."[78] The varying spheres in which the past had inspirational or informational value all form what I have followed Daniel Woolf in calling historical culture in Britain.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the seventeenth century was an important time in Boudica's story. It was in this period that Polydore Vergil's version of the early history of Britain supplanted the Galfridian myths, often known simply as the British History.[79] Prior to Polydore Vergil's resurrection of Tacitus's histories in the mid-sixteenth century, scholars had attributed the foundation of Britain to the Trojan exile Brutus. This story was embraced and retold by the Welsh monk, Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* written in the twelfth century. Geoffrey was also responsible for the introduction of King Arthur to the early history of Britain in the same work. But as the body of men who would become historians began to distance their own work from that of poets and playwrights during the course of the seventeenth century, the Galfridian account of ancient Britain, which had understandably captured the imagination of many writers, became suspect. While some clung to the stories as the more heroic of the British origin myths, others persisted in including what might have

[77] Mayer calls this early, fluid historical work that falls outside the canon "Baconian historiography", but that appellation is not of much use outside of a specific seventeenth-century context. "Historical culture" allows a much broader and longer perspective. See Mayer, *History and the early English novel*, 18-33.
[78] D.R. Woolf, "From hystories to the historical: five transitions in thinking about the past, 1500-1700" in P. Kewes (ed), *The uses of history in early modern England.* (San Marino, CA: The Henry Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 2006) pp. 31-67. 36. See also S.A.E. Mendyk, *"Speculum Britanniae": regional study, antiquarianism, and science in Britain to 1700*, (London: University of Toronto Press, 1989).
[79] For a narrative of this process and Polydore Vergil's part in it see T.D. Kendrick, *British antiquity*, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1950) ch. 6.

been fictions – such as the theory that London, or new Troy, has been founded by Brutus –because there was no irrefutable proof to the contrary.

This is not to say that there was no distinction between "fact" and "fiction" in the minds of seventeenth-century writers. This distinction has been lost on previous scholars of Boudica, such as Jodi Mikalachki, who did not speculate on authorial intent in her discussion of various early modern writers. But there had been debate as early as the sixteenth century (itself indebted to Plato) about the relative merits of "fact" and "fiction", and this had some bearing on how historical events and people were portrayed. Poetry, or imagined fiction, was celebrated for the purity of its motives by Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesie* (1595). "Now for the Poet, he nothing affirmeth, and therefore never lieth." By this Sidney meant that historical writers were occasionally guilty of transcending the ascribed limits of truth because they had established and were expected to adhere to those limits. But the poet never acknowledged the limits in the first place, and it followed that he could not commit the same crime. Joseph Levine has argued that such special pleading points to a clear divergence between fact and fiction that was being articulated during this period, and as a consequence, contemporaries articulated historical enquiry as the recitation of true events, and distanced it from the pursuit of an idea of truth through an imagined scenario.[80]

It is in this context that we find our starting point for this study. This was the period during which information about Boudica's story began to circulate as part of a larger narrative of British history retold in chronicles. As the century progressed, Boudica's individual character – her words, deeds, and appearance – also began to

[80] J.M. Levine dates this divergence from Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). Sidney is quoted in Levine, *The autonomy of history*, 18.

circulate independently of the national narrative. Fletcher's play, *Bonduca,* Edmund Bolton's *Nero Caesar,* and Thomas Heywood's account of Boudica in his biographical collection *Exemplary Lives*, all focused in on Boudica's individual story. This circulated her image through an audience whose interest in the past was growing during the period, as we will see. This expanding interest in the past in turn fed a concomitant change in the number and kind of historically-inspired works that were available, as the discussion of the chronicle genre below demonstrates.

As stated in the Introduction, other students of Boudica's reputation have suggested that the reign of James I was a turning point for her: the return of a man to the throne so long occupied by a woman led to Boudica's banishment from British history – or so the argument has gone. But I argue here that Boudica's importance during the reign of James I had little to do with her femininity. The early Stuart age was indeed a defining one for Boudica, but this was because it was a defining moment for historical culture more generally. I argue that Boudica's rediscovery and circulation reflected the nature of historical culture at the time, and was not a simple reflection of prevailing attitudes to women. Whether by negative portrayals or by heroic ones, Boudica became a fixture of British historical culture during the seventeenth century, a period in which others have argued she disappeared.

Instead, I will show that there is a distinct intellectual background to this period in which the Boudica story played a significant but hitherto unrecognised role. I use "historical culture" as a way of discussing a range of intellectual and material influences on understandings of the past. Images and public plays, as well as written works, will form part of the ensuing discussion, and all can be viewed as part of British "historical culture" by the nature of their content. The written sources for this chapter will be,

amongst others, Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577), John Fletcher's play *The Tragedie of Bonduca* (c. 1611), Edmund Bolton's antiquarian/historical treatise *Nero Caesar; or Monarchie Deprav'd, an Historicall Work* (1624), and Thomas Heywood's biographical/hagiographical *The Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts of Nine of the Most Worthy Women of the World* (1640). I will also introduce three images, one of which appeared in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, another in Edmund Bolton's *Nero Caesar*, and the last by the engraver George Glover, which appeared in Thomas Heywood's work. All of these had some impact on Boudica's place in historical culture, or illustrate her significance to political or historical discourse at the time they appeared. These sources – notably the works of Edmund Bolton, Thomas Heywood, and the engraver George Glover – must be considered together in order for us to fully understand and illustrate the notion of a discursive historical culture in this period.

It should also be noted that these were not the only representations of Boudica produced in the period, but they do constitute the most detailed accounts of her life and character before her appearance in the theatrical productions of the late 1690s explored in Chapter Two. Thus I will not engage with, for example, her brief appearances in Edmund Spenser's *The Fairie Queen*, or *The Ruines of Time*, or in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queenes*. As we saw in the introduction, she was also mentioned in William Camden's *Britannia*, Jodi Mikalachki's interpretation of which I have already addressed. Boudica also had a walk-on role in local chronicles such as John Stow's *Survey of London*. However, these have been considered by Samantha Frénée-Hutchins and in my estimation they simply serve as further evidence of Boudica's presence in the historical culture of the time. Spenser, Jonson, Camden, and others helped to maintain

Boudica's presence in the period, but it would not be feasible to include them all here when there were other works that dealt with Boudica in much more depth.

One aim of this chapter is to show that the prevailing opinion of Boudica amongst writers and artists in the seventeenth century was not unanimously negative, as has been argued by other scholars. Neither was she "written out"[81] of the narrative of British history by historical writers or "literary" authors in the reign of James I. She was not a hapless casualty of her sex at this or at any point, and while her obvious, though not particularly numerous, associations with Queen Elizabeth were a source of buoyancy for her, her affinity with the image of Elizabeth was not the only or even the primary reason that Boudica endured in historical culture.

This chapter seeks to address the interpretations of early modern writings about Boudica that have been advanced by literature scholars, and to suggest an alternative way of reading Boudica's place in the period. Primarily this will involve reasserting the differing intentions and processes involved in "historical" work, such as that by Edmund Bolton, and fictionalised portrayals of Boudica. Boudica's "factual" foundation was important to historical writers in the seventeenth century, and it influenced how they wrote about her.[82] As Barbara Shapiro has argued in her highly persuasive study of the period, "Telling the truth was the first and foremost requirement of the historian."[83] (I am reluctant to use the word "historian" in this period, preferring "historical writer" as a more capacious category of authorship, but others occasionally do use "historian".) As we will see, it was the discovery of facts for the sake of discovering facts that

[81] Mikalachki, *Legacy of Boadicea*, 104; Frénée-Hutchins, *Representations*, 158.
[82] For an extremely helpful and lucid account of the paramount nature of "fact" in seventeenth-century historiography, see B. Shapiro, *A culture of fact: England, 1550-1720* (London: Cornell University Press, 2000) pp. 34-62.
[83] Shapiro, *Culture of fact*, 56.

motivated Edmund Bolton. Of course, his facts led him to a conclusion that glorified his benefactor, James I, but we should not dismiss Bolton's work as that of a sycophant. Edmund Bolton produced a study of Boudica that included antiquarian and historical research, as well as being pro-monarchy polemic. For Bolton, the only way to prove his point was with facts, and he made every effort to discover them. Until the archaeological research of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Bolton's *Nero Caesar* was the most in-depth investigation of Boudica's role in British history, and to read his work as nothing more than propaganda is to overlook the insights it can give us into seventeenth-century historical culture.

Furthermore I will seek to show that we can begin to trace Boudica in an idea of "popular history" by the middle of the seventeenth century. By "popular" I simply mean historical work that could appeal to and was accessible by a non-specialist audience. An increasing interest in historical production for popular audiences, evidenced in Boudica's case by the dramatist Thomas Heywood's biographical collection, also assisted in circulating an idea of Boudica before 1650.

In the first sections of this chapter, I will ground the study in the seventeenth century and briefly explain the role of the chronicle genre in circulating ideas about the past, and, it can be presumed, Boudica's part in it. Afterward, I will explore the first fictionalised depiction of Boudica, found in John Fletcher's *The Tragedie of Bonduca* (c. 1611). While certainly accessible, the play does not appear to have prejudiced early modern audiences against Boudica as an individual, nor did this work have any impact on how the historical writer, Edmund Bolton, approached her story ten years later. Fletcher's play actually served to project Boudica's story into a more publically

accessible form of historical culture, despite its negative portrayal of the titular character.

Part I. The Chronicles

The chronicle was the primary means by which historical accounts were compiled and circulated in Britain during the middle ages and into the sixteenth century.[84] The most famous work of this kind was Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1577). Boudica appeared in Holinshed's work both as a part of a chronological discussion of events in Britain, and in an illustration, probably the earliest extant "portrait" of the ancient warrior queen. Distinguished by its year-by-year organisation focused around the reigns of monarchs, the chronicle was an historical genre that bore more resemblance to a list than to a coherent narrative of people and events. Despite their large size, chronicles were relatively inexpensive and therefore popular. Twenty-five editions of John Stow's *Chronicle of London*, which rivalled Holinshed's work in popularity and longevity, were produced between 1565 and 1632.[85] This popularity among an audience of ordinary people, along with the modest backgrounds of both Holinshed and Stow, the best known authors of the genre, laid the chronicle open to contemporary criticism. Edmund Bolton's condemnation of these "vast and vulgar tomes" was a reference simultaneously to the genre's primary authorship, its target audience, and its subject matter. Chroniclers were accused of

[84] D.R. Woolf, "Genre into artifact: the decline of the English chronicle in the sixteenth century", *Sixteenth Century Journal* (1988) 321-354; D.R. Woolf, "Erudition and the idea of history in Renaissance England" *Renaissance Quarterly*, (1987) 11-48.
[85] Woolf, "Genre into artifact", 346. For a discussion of John Stow's work see I. Gadd and A. Gillespie (eds), *John Stow (1525-1605) and the making of the English past. Studies in early modern culture and the history of the book* (London: The British Library, 2004)

paying undue attention to matters "impertinent", as in the case of Holinshed's discussion of murder cases.[86]

Holinshed's *Chronicles* began as an effort to compile "a universal cosmographie", and as such it was the collaborative work of many printers, writers and patrons, whose collective efforts have come to be known under Raphael Holinshed's name alone.[87] The work has acquired a reputation as the inspiration behind many of Shakespeare's history plays. In the case of Boudica and British historical culture, we can also credit Holinshed's work with being the first to provide extensive coverage of Boudica's rebellion, to the extent that it is also the first work to include an illustration of her. The image was clearly inspired by Dio Cassius, who included a physical description of Boudica, while Tacitus had remained silent on the subject. Presumably Holinshed relied on Dio Cassius's retelling of the story because it was the more detailed of the two classical texts, and provided not only a physical description of the protagonist, but also a sensational account of the horrors perpetrated by Boudica's hordes against the Roman settlers, abandoned and defenceless in the cities she mercilessly demolished. Jodi Mikalachki has argued that Holinshed's inclusion of these more distasteful elements of the Boudica story serves as evidence that he or his collaborators were negatively disposed to a female warrior.[88] However, given the popularity of the chronicle as a genre, and Holinshed's chronicle in particular, the more likely explanation would seem to be that Dio Cassius's was the more titillating version

[86] R. Helgerson, "Murder in Faversham: Holinshed's impertinent history" in D. Kelley and D.H. Sacks (eds), *The historical imagination in early modern Britain: history, rhetoric, and fiction, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 133-158.
[87] See A. Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[88] Mikalachki, *Legacy of Boadicea*, 14.

of the two available and therefore the more appealing to an audience with an appetite for violent stories.

One reading of Boudica's position in the *Chronicles* comes from Annabel Patterson, who has argued that the whole work was a project to write a "discontinuous history of ancient constitutionalism."[89] Rather than focusing on those parts of the *Chronicles* which were obvious recitations of Dio Cassius's account, Patterson points toward one of Holinshed's (or one of his collaborators') insertions in the text. According to Patterson, Holinshed and his co-writers were at pains to give Boudica a politicised position in British history, an argument in stark contrast to the view that Boudica was a source of embarrassment amongst early modern writers. By the addition of certain key phrases to Boudica's oration to her troops, her position becomes that of a heroic leader of common men. According to Holinshed's version, Boudica stated:

> Wherefore my well beloved citizens, friendes, and kinsfolkes (for I think we are all of kin, since we were borne and dwell in this Ile, and have one name common to us all) let us now, even now (I saie, because we have not doone it heretofore, and *whislt the remembrance of our ancient libertie remaineth*) stick togither, and performe that thing which dooth perteine to valiant and hardie courages, to the end we maie injoie, not onelie the name of libertie, but also freedome it self, and thereby leave our force and valiant acts for an example to posteritie.[90]

The interpolated text in italics would seem to point to Holinshed's (or one of his many collaborator's) desire to write Boudica into the origins of British liberty. According to Patterson, Holinshed's Boudica pointed to a primeval national consciousness, cohesion and political freedom, and the opinion in the *Chronicles* is that her defeat drove the nation into a political dark age.[91]

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[89] Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles*, 105.
[90] Quoted in Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles*, 105. Emphasis is Patterson's.
[91] Ibid.

It is possible that this was the intention behind the alteration of Boudica's speech by the editors of the *Chronicles*, preceding Boudica's eighteenth-century association with discourses of patriotism, discussed further in the following chapters. But it is important to maintain that in doing so, Holinshed was not creating a fictional Boudica: he was using the existing "factual" information about Boudica to root the origins of British liberty in the very ancient history of the place itself. Patterson's interpretation of Boudica's position in the *Chronicles* is certainly more persuasive than Mikalachki's. It shows that from the outset, Boudica was seen as a patriotic Briton whose patriotism had been recorded in history.

There is less ambiguity in Boudica's association in the work with Queen Elizabeth, evidenced by the illustration of Boudica reproduced in the *Chronicles* (see Figure 1). Dio Cassius had described Boudica as having long, light-coloured hair, being of large stature, and dressed in a skirt of multiple hues. He said that she bore in her arms a hare, which she released after a prayer to Andraste, the goddess of victory, as a sign of good fortune for the benefit of her assembled troops. Holinshed's illustrator included all of these elements in the depiction of Boudica, but what is most striking is the Elizabethan nature of the picture itself. Boudica and her troops were made to resemble the late sixteenth-century leader with her army, rather than a gaggle of barbarians led by a fury. Ten years after the *Chronicles* first appeared, the poet Jonathan Aske would refer to Boudica as Voada, "England's happie queen", and draw an explicit connection between "Voada's" early successes against the Romans and Elizabeth's victory over the Spanish.[92] It seemed not to matter to Aske that Boudica's campaign ended in ruin. What mattered was only that she was a brave female leader recorded in history with whom the

[92] J. Aske, *Elizabethan Triumphans* (London: Thomas Gubbin and Thomas Newman, 1588).

very real Elizabeth could be associated. It is clear that by this point, Boudica had been established as a figure illustrative of the ancient British past, as well as of a particularly female form of monarchy. We will return to these themes at points throughout this thesis.

But by the end of the sixteenth century, the chronicle genre was in decline: works by John Stow and similar writers were eclipsed by other forms of historical culture such as history plays. The conventional argument for the decline of the chronicle genre is that Renaissance humanism effected a change in the manner in which historical writers sought to understand the past.[93] However, it was not that the historical material that had been compiled by chroniclers lost its relevance, but rather the particular mode of transmission outlived its usefulness. Even as their popularity dwindled, chronicles continued to serve as depositories for many of the facts and myths that lay behind the emerging "politic" histories of the seventeenth century.[94] Quite aside from the intellectual currents that flowed away from the chronicle genre, Louis B. Wright has shown that, "The formal chronicles of London and England were not sufficient to satisfy the demand of the middle-class public for historical reading matter" even as early as the late sixteenth century.[95] Daniel Woolf has demonstrated the veracity of this conclusion more recently.[96] Wright and Woolf have both shown that the historical material that had been compiled in chronicles did not disappear from the public imagination, but rather it dispersed into other forms of historical culture which were

[93] F.J. Levy, "Hayward, Daniel and the beginnings of politic history in England". *Huntington Library Quarterly*, (1987) 1-34.
[94] Woolf, "Genre into artifact", 347.
[95] L. B. Wright, "The Elizabethan middle-class taste for history", *The Journal of Modern History* (1931) 175-197, p. 185.
[96] Woolf, "Genre into artifact", 332.

themselves aimed at the chronicle-reading audience. Some of these forms of historical culture, such as sets of images, collected life stories, and drama will be discussed below.

Raphael Holinshed's work is significant here because it presents the most likely way in which audiences might have encountered Boudica, and it contains the first image of the ancient queen that allied her with the very real Queen Elizabeth. Soon after she appeared in Holinshed's *Chronicle*, and in Camden's *Britannia*, John Fletcher produced the first fictionalised Boudica character in his play, *The Tragedie of Bonduca*. Fletcher was responsible for Boudica's first outing as an individual character, divorced from a larger narrative of history as one might find in the chronicle genre. It is possible that, like Shakespeare, Holinshed had been the initial inspiration for Fletcher's own history play. He had certainly encountered Boudica's story in other works and saw it as a singular episode in history deserving of a dramatised treatment. His work is the first example of Boudica migrating across generic boundaries, from chronicle to stage, for an audience beyond scholarly or court circles. Even if Fletcher's work could be interpreted as being "against" Boudica, it also circulated her story in one of the most accessible forms of historical culture.

Part II. John Fletcher's *The Tragedie of Bonduca* (c. 1613)

John Fletcher (1579-1625) was one of the most prolific of William Shakespeare's contemporaries. In his early life, he thought himself destined for a clerical career, having been granted an MA from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge in 1598. After an absence of the historical record, he reappears in 1606 as a playwright in London. Fletcher collaborated with Shakespeare on some few occasions, and the two

undoubtedly influenced each other's work.[97] However, Fletcher's most fruitful collaborative efforts in the early part of his career were with Francis Beaumont (1584-1616), whose brother John was at least acquainted with the historical writer Edmund Bolton, whose own life will be detailed below. Fletcher and Beaumont had a long shared career as dramatists, beginning with *The Woman Hater* in 1606. The two were acquainted with Ben Jonson, and were probably members of the "Fraternitie of Sireniacal gentlemen", a drinking society which held its meetings at the Mermaid Tavern in the parish of St. Mildred, near the steps to the Thames.[98] By all accounts, John Fletcher and Francis Beaumont were close, both personally and professionally. There has been some speculation that the two were lovers, although Beaumont is known to have been married.[99] Their collaboration came to an end in 1613, when Beaumont suffered a stroke and ceased to produce new works. He died in 1616.[100]

Although Fletcher's first attempts at writing independently were not well-received by critics, he continued to produce works of his own. *The Tragedie of Bonduca* was probably one of Fletcher's solitary compositions, although one can see the stamp of Shakespeare. *The Tragedie of Bonduca* has certain similarities in form and style to *Antony and Cleopatra*, and its setting in ancient Britain aligns it with Shakespeare's

[97] I. Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) p. 91.
[98] M. O'Callaghan, "Patrons of the Mermaid Tavern (*act.* 1611)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, online edn, Oct 2006). [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/theme/95279, accessed 20 Nov 2012]
[99] P.J. Finkelpearl, "Beaumont, Francis (1584/5–1616)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, online edn, Oct 2006) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1871, accessed 20 Nov 2012].
[100] G. McMullan, "Fletcher, John (1579–1625)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, online edn, Oct 2006) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9730, accessed 20 Nov 2012].

Cymbeline, also written in about 1613.[101] Ancient Britain and ancient British characters were becoming more common features in the pre-Civil War theatre, but Fletcher's play was the only one to feature Boudica as its titular character.[102] It is possible that Shakespeare shied away from Boudica out of professional respect for Fletcher, but this is only my conjecture. Fletcher's spelling of the name – "Bonduca" – seems to have been his own invention.

The Tragedie of Bonduca was recorded by the clerk of the King's Men actors' troop, Mr. Knight. His rendition was imperfect – some sections were missing, others had to be pieced together from Fletcher's foul books. Contemporary comment on the production is scanty, so it is impossible to know for certain how it was received by audiences. Given Boudica's portrayal in the play, it is possible that Fletcher himself had misgivings about his eponymous character. The work is hardly one befitting a heroine of Boudica's later stature. The play opens after "Bonduca's" ill treatment at the hands of the Romans. She is in a disagreement with her cousin, Caradoc, prince of a neighbouring tribe and guardian of his nephew, the young Hengo, over the conduct of the war with Rome. The outraged Bonduca prefers vengeance and bloodshed, while Caradoc urges caution and diplomacy. The action shifts between the Roman and British camps, and we meet the Roman general, Suetonius, who is Caradoc's opposite number as the paragon of Roman integrity. Bonduca's behaviour worsens and, along with her daughters, who, despite their suffering – Fletcher implies they are partially to blame for their own sexual assault – emerges as a barbaric and singularly unsympathetic character.

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[101] A. Escobedo, "From Britannia to England: Cymbeline and the beginning of nations", *Shakespeare Quarterly* (2008) 60-87

[102] G. McMullan, "The colonisation of early Britain on the Jacobean stage" in G. McMullan and D. Matthews (eds), *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). McMullan provides a list of plays with this setting.

The trio commit suicide in the penultimate act, with Bonduca berating her younger daughter as a "whore" for falling in love with one of her Roman rapists. This leaves the audience without the titular character for the last act of the play. Fletcher could just as easily have been called the play "Caradoc".

It is unclear why Fletcher chose to tell the story as he did. Almost two centuries later, a decision by Richard Glover to call his play "Boadicia" despite the action being focused on a second, male character – this time played by David Garrick – drew much comment from critics, who would have preferred more exploration of the title character, or at the very least a change in the title.[103] It is impossible to say whether this was the case with a Jacobean audience, who may or may not have been familiar with the historical basis for Fletcher's fictionalised work. Glover probably made the choice to capitalise on Boudica's famous name and on Garrick's famous presence simultaneously, but we cannot be sure that a play called "Bonduca" produced in the early seventeenth century would have drawn similar numbers. We cannot know how many people who saw *Bonduca* knew they were watching a fictionalised version of a historical figure.

Scholars agree that the portrayal of the Boudica character is a negative one, and one can easily see why. One interpretation of the play is that it was Fletcher's exploration of the emerging British colonial project. Claire Jowitt has argued that Fletcher used the model of ancient Britain in order to explore the perennial problems faced by colonising armies, of which Britain's was now the most prolific example.[104] Gordon McMullan's reading of the text, especially as it relates to plays with similar

[103] See Chapter Three.
[104] C. Jowitt, "Colonialism, politics, and Romanization in John Fletcher's 'Bonduca'", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. (2003) 475-494.

settings in British antiquity, supports this view.[105] It is *Bonduca*'s potential for a gendered reading that has stimulated the most commentary, although this is never far removed from discussions of colonisation and civilisation. According to Joan Crawford, more than any other work of the period, Fletcher's *Bonduca* "articulates an important cross-section of anxieties and conceptual shifts about women worthies and male homosociability that alludes to the court and reign of James I. Fletcher's *Bonduca*, with its emphasis on military loyalty and honor, contains the threat Boadicea represented…."[106] For Crawford, Boudica was an obvious stand-in for Queen Elizabeth, and the warrior-queen's defeat by the Romans was representative of the triumph of masculine civilization over the barbarism of petticoat government. This is a view of the play shared by Samantha Frénée-Hutchins, who has argued that "Barbaric stories of ancient Britain were gradually re-represented as a dividing line between the savage female of nature and the civilised man of culture. This seemed the only way of assimilating the paradox of Boudica's female sex into the history of the nation's past."[107]

This view is echoed elsewhere. Wendy C. Nielsen agrees with the assessment of the play (as well as other plays in which Boudica had a prominent part) made by another literary scholar, Carolyn D. Williams, who has argued that Boudica had to quit the stage before she could become a "national institution".[108] These scholars argue that this negative portrayal was the consequence of James I's arrival in England, which

[105] McMullan, "The colonisation of early Britain on the Jacobean stage".
[106] Crawford, "'*The Tragedie of Bonduca*' and the anxieties of the masculine government of James I", 358.
[107] Frénée-Hutchins, "Representations", 186.
[108] Nielsen. "Boadicea on Stage", 596; C.D. Williams, "'This Frantic Woman': Boadicea and English Neo-Classical Embarrassment" in. M. Biddiss and M. Wyke (eds), *The Uses and Abuses of Antiquity*. (Bern and New York: Peter Lang, 1999). 19-36, p. 32.

heralded a renewed public mood of condemnation aimed at all women, and especially female rulers. Frénée-Hutchins summarises it thus: "Boudica was slowly but surely domesticated as women were pushed out of public roles into the private sphere of home and family."[109]

One might read the play differently: Caradoc's character is an example of slavish, unthinking devotion to the precepts of honour at the expense of dignity and patriotism, which complicates a view of the play as straightforwardly misogynist, or at least anti-Boudica. Although Bonduca's death removed her from the action of the play at an early stage, it also demonstrated her unwillingness to surrender herself or her lands to the invaders. This is the opposite of Caradoc's final actions in the play, when he reconciles with the Romans – who have just been responsible for the death of his young charge, Hengo – and agrees to accompany them back to Rome. There are echoes here of Caractacus, king of the Silures, who was taken as a captive to Rome, but honoured for his bravery there. But this end might also have been a parody of gentlemanly comportment, with Bonduca's demise serving as a parody of incivility. Bonduca's dying words, "place in your Roman flesh … A British soul…", gave a clear message to the audience that the Romans had much to learn from the people they had conquered.

Previous readings of Fletcher's play reveal it to have been negatively disposed toward both Boudica and the "savagery" of ancient Britain, making it a damning critique of female rule. And indeed, it may have been a damning critique. But I suggest that we should view Fletcher's work in a more nuanced way. Fletcher's play may have been critical of the present, or of the memory of Elizabeth I, but by "using" Boudica to critique female rule (if indeed this was what he was doing), he was also building

[109] Frénée-Hutchins. "Representations", 24.

Boudica's presence in the historical culture of the period. He was creating an imagined, fictionalised version of an incident in the British past, not writing a "factual" revision of that incident history, and his play helped to project Boudica into the public imagination, not to condemn her to oblivion. His imagined version of the Boudica story was more than likely intended as an entertainment, not as a condemnation to last through the ages.

It is nearly impossible to trace the fate of *Bonduca* as an individual work. We cannot know for sure who saw it, or later who read it, or how widely known it was before the mid-century. Like all theatrical works, it was banned from being staged from 1642 until the Restoration. This period marks a turning point in the manner in which works meant for the stage, regardless of their subject matter, were disseminated to a public deprived of performance. Dramas became subjects for close reading and the works of Beaumont and Fletcher were especially popular in this form between 1642 and 1660.[110] The authorities during the Puritan revolution were less concerned with plays than they were with the more obvious forms of propaganda found in news pamphlets, for example. The publication and distribution of quartos was often overlooked by the authorities and new editions were advertised with relative ease.[111] The collected works of Beaumont and Fletcher first appeared in print together in 1647, the same year in which suppressive ordinances against the playhouses were made permanent, but again, it is difficult to find clear references to *Bonduca* independent of the collected works of Beaumont and Fletcher in the period before 1696, when George Colman staged his revised version of it.[112] *Bonduca* was included in the 1647 folio and was also published

[110] W. van Lennep. *The London stage, 1660-1700*. Part I. (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962) cxxviii. Hereafter *TLS*. See also L. B. Wright, "The reading of plays during the Puritan Revolution", *Huntington Library Bulletin* (1934) 72-108.
[111] Wright, "Reading of plays", 74.
[112] See Chapter Two.

in an individual quarto at the same time. Several of their titles, including *Bonduca*, appear in a catalogue of all printed plays for sale in London in 1656.[113] The most popular written works of the Puritan period were to become the most-performed works of the Restoration. Thirty-nine Fletcher and Beaumont plays, *Bonduca* among them, were acted in London between 1660 and 1700.[114]

Given the numerous and various ways in which people might have encountered Fletcher's *Bonduca*, it would stand to reason that Fletcher's play should have been one of if not the most influential portrayals of Boudica in British historical culture during the reign of James I. History plays and early modern literature have been credited, usually by literary scholars, with bringing British history to a wide audience and spreading an idea of national identity.[115] These works were accessible to a large audience that might not have otherwise encountered the events and characters of national history in any other medium. Additionally, the general popularity of Fletcher's works, even during the period in which the theatres were closed, would seem to point to *Bonduca*'s potential to have had lasting impact on the Boudica story in British historical culture. But as mentioned above, Fletcher's unquestionably savage *Bonduca* did not seem to have prejudiced later writers against its titular character. Few traces of her blood-thirstiness or of her daughters' uncouth, mocking attitude to the Romans outlived

[113]P. Massinger, T. Middleton, W. Rowley, *The Old Law, together with an exact and perfect catalogue of all the playes...more exactly printed then ever before. (London: 1656)* n.p.
[114] van Lennep, *TLS*, Part I, cxxviii.
[115] R. Helgerson, *Forms of nationhood: the Elizabethan writing of England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992); I. Kamps, *Historiography and ideology in Stuart drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); D. Baker and W. Maley (eds), *British identities and English Renaissance literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); M. Floyd-Wilson, *English ethnicity and race in early modern drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); D. Goy-Blanquet, *Shakespeare's early history plays: from chronicle to stage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); P. Schwyzer. *Literature, nationalism and memory in early modern England and Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); D. Loewenstein and P. Stevens, *Early modern nationalism and Milton's England* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

Fletcher's play – they certainly never appeared in historical narratives. The only contribution Fletcher seems to have made was the name itself, "Bonduca", which was employed by Edmund Bolton (occasionally) and by Thomas Heywood. One might conjecture that Fletcher's overall negativity towards his Bonduca character and her death relatively early in the action of the play might have made it unappealing to audiences in the long term.

If indeed Fletcher did intend to remove Boudica from the historical record, a more effective approach would have been not to write *Bonduca* in the first place. Fletcher's play seems to have done the work of cementing Boudica in a narrative of British history because soon after his play was staged, Edmund Bolton produced his major work, *Nero Caesar; or monarchie depraved*, and the engraver George Glover included Boudica in his set of images of female worthies (this set will be discussed later in this chapter). Although Fletcher's account was heavily fictionalised, it presents an example of a fictional account having worked in tandem with factual ones to form an idea of Boudica in the historical culture of seventeenth-century Britain. In the next section, we will shift our focus to the works of Tacitus, and then to a "factual" account of Boudica's story.

Part III. Tacitus at the court of James I

As the ultimate origin of Boudica's story, the most significant ancient writer in Boudica's filtration through historical culture was Cornelius Tacitus. The works of Tacitus – *Agricola*, the *Annals*, and the *Histories*, all written between about 80AD and 113AD – had risen in popularity over the course of the sixteenth century, and he

eventually usurped Livy as the most influential classical writer in Britain.[116] Tacitus's influence was critical to the development of the new "politic" history, and his style was seen as the model for Renaissance historians to follow. For many writers, Tacitus exemplified the historian's role as investigator, plumbing the depths and scaling the heights of human behaviour, and applying the lessons learned through such investigations to public life. Tacitus's histories were focused on the period of the decline of the Roman Empire, when to take part in public life was to risk subjecting one's life and loved ones to potentially severe retribution from a repressive and tyrannical regime.

Tacitus's works were seen as particularly pertinent to the problems faced by the denizens of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean courts. According to Peter Burke, for men and women who suspected that they were living in an oppressive autocratic system, Tacitus provided guidance on the appropriate course of action for one whose loyalty to the state was beyond question, but whose relationship with their leader was one of fear and mistrust. But Burke has also shown how Tacitus's portrayals of tyranny in Rome could be read as bolstering either side in a conflict between the governed and the governing, a dichotomy Burke calls the "black Tacitus" and the "red Tacitus". The "black" reading of Tacitus's works revealed a guide for the tyrant, comparable to widely held beliefs about Machiavelli's *The Prince*. The "red" Tacitus served the opposition, and instead showed those living in a tyrannical state how to remain "constant" in the face of oppression.[117]

[116] P. Burke, "A survey of the popularity of ancient historians, 1450-1700", *History and Theory* (1966) 135-152, p. 137.
[117] P. Burke, "Tacitism" in T.A. Dorey (ed.), *Tacitus* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962) 149-171.

One example of history, politics and philosophy married together is Tacitus's retelling of the story of the unfortunate Seneca, once tutor and advisor to Emperor Nero, and later the most famous victim of Nero's paranoia. After a lifetime of service, Seneca was implicated in a conspiracy against the emperor, forced to commit suicide by cutting his own veins, and finally suffocated in a hot bath. The Flemish scholar Justus Lipsius edited and interpreted the works of Tacitus and Seneca in the late sixteenth century, marking the beginning of the Neostoic movement on the continent. Neostoic thought was based on the teachings of Seneca, himself the founder of Stoic philosophy, and an advocate of dutiful service and the cultivation of individual virtue, even in the face of a ruler as tyrannical as Nero. Among members of the Jacobean court, the "red" Tacitean reference to "constancy" would have conjured allusions to Seneca's philosophy. This new strain, Lipsian Neostoicism, was never a single static idea, but it tended to advocate "prudence" and "constancy" as approaches to political engagement.[118] This meant that men should approach a life of public service with virtuous intent, tread carefully when faced with the whims of tyrants, and maintain constant loyalty to the state regardless of its figurehead. It is argued that Lipsian Neostoicism came to be the blueprint for the foundation of the modern state, at least on the continent.[119] The reality in Jacobean Britain was somewhat different, where Neostoicism became an academic discussion rather than a call to action.[120]

It was through Lipsius and the early translations of Tacitus's histories, notably Henry Savile's in 1591, that Tacitism and Stoicism came to percolate through the late

[118] A. McCrea, *Constant minds: political virtue and the Lipsian paradigm in England, 1583-1650*, (London: Toronto University Press, 1997) xx.
[119] G. Oestereich, *Neostoicism and the early modern state* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
[120] McCrea, *Constant minds*, 4.

Elizabethan and Jacobean intellectual atmosphere. Seneca's death as described by Tacitus and reinterpreted by Lipsius and Savile became symbolically linked to resistance against tyrannical monarchs, an idea that appealed to some members of the late Elizabethan and early Stuart courts. The execution of the Earl of Essex by Elizabeth provided the most obvious parallel between the ancient situation and the state of affairs in Elizabeth's reign. Essex had been one of the promoters of Neostoicism and his execution was compared to that of Seneca under Nero.[121] Tacitism, or the perspective that historians should act as the investigators and narrators of the relationship between the governed and the governors, and the Neostoic paradigm that took the view that the public life of the governed should be virtuous and constant in interactions with the governors, both originated in Tacitus's historical works. Tacitean historiography and Senecan Neostoicism, came to be part of the same ethical and political movement.[122]

Modern historians of history have pointed out that the new Tacitean history, comparable to "politic history," brought about the accepted lesson among seventeenth-century thinkers that what had occurred in the past could be an effective guide for statesmen and courtiers in the present because the fundamentals of human behaviour did not change. This idea came from Lipsius, who used Tacitus to "privilege the role of ancient wisdom as the means to understand the demands of the contemporary world."[123] First-century Rome was *similitudo temporum* for late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-

[121] This account is taken from J.H.M. Salmon, "Stoicism and Roman example: Seneca and Tacitus in Jacobean England", *Journal of the History of Ideas*. (1989) 199-225.
[122] Salmon, "Seneca and Tacitus", 199.
[123] A. McCrea, *Constant minds: political virtue and the Lipsian paradigm in England, 1583-1650* (London: Toronto University Press, 1997) xx. See also A. McRae, *Literature, satire and the early Stuart state* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

century Britain, and readings of "Tacitus yielded the disenchanted view of political realities required for effective engagement in the present."[124]

Given the importance of Tacitus and Boudica's origins in his work, it seems clear that it is in the context of Lipsian Neostoicism that we must view Boudica's reputation in this period. Scholars have convincingly shown the imagined relationship between Tacitus's ancient Rome and Jacobean England that prevailed in the period, but I wish to suggest that even if we full accept that the present mirrored the past in the seventeenth century, this did not divest that past of its own character. The present was seen as an imagined reflection of the past, but it does not follow that the past was dependent on the present for its significance in the period. I will explore this idea in the next section through the work of the historical writer and staunch royalist Edmund Bolton (1574-c.1634). One of his works in particular, *Nero Caesar; or Monarchie Deprav'd* (1624), has come under some scrutiny from scholars such as Alan Bradford for its blatant political bias. Bradford has argued that Bolton was staunchly anti-Tacitean because he rejected the new "politic history" that a deep engagement with Tacitus's works and Neostoic philosophy had begun to foster among his contemporaries. Bradford's reading of *Nero Caesar* drives him to the extreme conclusion that the work was nothing more than cynical monarchist propaganda masquerading as scholarship.[125] Perhaps equally unfairly, Daniel Woolf has described Bolton as, "an egregiously sycophantic, almost pathetic, suitor for office and favour."[126] Without doubt, *Nero Caesar* was a work of brazen, even blatant royalism, but it was

[124] McCrea, *Constant minds*, 10.
[125] A. T. Bradford, "Stuart absolutism and the 'utility' of Tacitus", *Huntington Library Quarterly*, (1983) 127-155.
[126] D.R. Woolf. "Edmund Bolton, Francis Bacon and the making of the *Hypercritica*, 1618-1621". *Bodleian Library Record*. Volume XI, 3. (1983) pp. 162-168. 166.

also an impressive display of antiquarian, historical, and ideological craftsmanship. Despite his low opinion of Bolton, Woolf admitted that *Nero Caesar* was, "one of the earliest English attempts to synthesize humanist narrative history with advanced philological and antiquarian scholarship."[127] This calls into question Bradford's assessment of Bolton as anti-Tacitean. I will argue that we should view the overlap between history writing and political or ideological trends as a characteristic of seventeenth-century historical culture, and not read it as indicating a lack of historical rigour. Bolton's *Nero Caesar* is a prime example of the kind of conceptual overlap which was characteristic of seventeenth-century historical culture, and to which historians (and scholars of literature) should be sensitive in their own work.

Part IV. *Nero Caesar; or Monarchie Deprav'd* (1624)

Edmund Bolton (c.1574-1634) was an antiquary and historical writer who lived and worked in an integrated community of courtiers and scholars, but whose Catholic faith undoubtedly set him apart from many of his contemporaries. His Catholicism was the key to many of his most important relationships within the court of James I. However, Bolton's life was not particularly happy, marked as it was by little professional success. His posthumous reputation could not begin to approach that of his friend William Camden, and modern historians have granted him only scant and intermittent attention.[128] We know that he endured a lifetime beset by pecuniary woes. Like many

[127] D.R. Woolf. "Bolton , Edmund Mary (*b.* 1574/5, *d.* in or after 1634)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, 2004) Online edition. [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2800, accessed 20 Nov 2012]

[128] E.M. Portal, "The Academ Roial of King's James I." *Proceedings of the British Academy, 1915-1916*. (London: Humphrey Milford, 1916) 189-208; T. H. Blackburn, "Edmund Bolton's 'London, King Charles His Augusta, or City Royal'". *Huntington Library Quarterly*. (1962) 315-323; T. H. Blackburn. "The date and evolution of Edmund Bolton's *Hypercritica*", *Studies in Philology*, (1966) 196-202.

debtors, he was a man whose quixotic ambitions exceeded his financial means and social position. But this financial shortcoming did not stop him from producing a number of substantial works of a historical character. His first was *The Elements of Armories* (1610), a contribution to the growing interest in coats of arms and heraldry.[129] Even at this early date, Edmund Bolton was clearly integrated within a London-based literary and scholarly community. He was a friend to John Beaumont, whose brother, Francis Beaumont, collaborated with John Fletcher, the author of *The Tragedie of Bonduca*. John Beaumont was a poet and a man of letters with intimate court connections.[130] He penned the opening verses for Bolton's early work *The Elements of Armories*.[131]

Bolton's connections in London extended to the heights of power. He maintained a close association with James I throughout the early part of the century, as well as with the king's controversial favourite, the Duke of Buckingham. Buckingham had been the subject of the satirical play *Sejanus*, by Ben Jonson, who cast him in the title role of his play about the Roman Emperor Tiberius's favourite. Ever the faithful servant, Bolton responded to Jonson's *Sejanus* with a history of the reign of Tiberius. Unfortunately, this has not survived. One could reasonably presume that it took the opposite view of Tiberius and Sejanus to Jonson's. Tellingly, Bolton had been known to publish under the penname "Philanactophil", or "Friend of the King's Friend", so his association with James and Buckingham was hardly a secret.[132]

[129] Woolf, "Bolton, Edmund Mary" ODNB, Online.
[130] Beaumont was also a favourite poet of Maria, countess of Buckingham, mother to the Duke of Buckingham. Beaumont also shared Bolton's adherence to the old faith. See R. D. Sell. "Sir John Beaumont", ODNB.
[131] Portal, "Academ Roial", 191.
[132] Ibid.

But soon after James's death in 1625 Bolton lost what sway he had at court and turned to cultivating ties with the London merchant elite in order to keep afloat financially. He also asked his wife's brother, Endymion Porter, for support, although this was not always forthcoming. Porter was a Catholic sympathiser, a close friend to the Duke of Buckingham and a prominent figure at court; he was also destined to endure a lifetime of pestering from his sister's destitute but ambitious husband. The exact date of Bolton's death is unknown, but it is thought that he died in about 1634 at Marshalsea, where he was imprisoned after he was unable to pay the fine levied on him as a Catholic recusant.[133]

That Bolton's career has not garnered much attention from modern historians is unfortunate because, unlike many of his contemporaries in Britain, Bolton had an interest in the actual practice of historical writing. Often those of his time who took a more reflective position toward historical practice placed most emphasis on the reading of it, not the writing. Therefore Bolton was somewhat unusual in that he wrote a treatise on the subject of writing histories, entitled *Hypercritica or a rule of judgment for writing or reading our histories.* He may have begun work on the treatise as early as 1596, but it is unlikely that he finished it before 1621, and it was not published until 1722.[134] Bolton also attempted to form a "Roial Society" to replace the Society of Antiquaries, which had formed in the last years of Elizabeth's reign and met for the final time in 1614.[135] Bolton petitioned James I for financial support for the scheme in 1617 but failed to make any definitive progress before the king's death. Charles I did

[133] Blackburn, "Edmund Bolton's 'London, King Charles His Augusta, or City Royal'", 323.
[134] Blackburn, "Edmund Bolton's *Hypercritica*", 202. The text can be found in *Nicolai Triveti Annalium continuatio…Edmundi Boltoni Hypercritica* (Oxonii: E Theatro Sheldoniano, 1722) pp. 193-242.
[135] Portal. "The Academ Roial of King's James I", 189.

not share his father's interest in learned activity and the scheme was abandoned.[136] In 1629, Bolton published a study of gentility and apprenticeship, *The Cittie Advocate*, reflecting his growing need for support in the London business community in the wake of the end of what had been a relatively easy relationship with the court of James I.[137] Yet even this work, which seems to be a flagrantly instrumental way of procuring patronage from city merchants, shows evidence of Bolton's intellectual interests. He had a lifelong enthusiasm for the history of the city of London, even going so far as to petition the aldermen of the city for funds to write a new history to replace that of John Stow. His suggested level of remuneration, however, did not endear him to the aldermen and he abandoned the project in its early stages.

Bolton's intermittent focus on history as an ordered practice – evidenced by his own treatise on its writing, and the attempt to create a learned body of historical writers – suggests that his motives for historical work were not single-mindedly self-promoting or purely sycophantic, as has previously been suggested. It would seem that he did have a deep and genuine interest in the practice of history, even when he sought patronage from other sources. Bolton's works demonstrate an erudite approach to historical practice, combining narrative with antiquarian research, while still being, it must be said, nakedly propagandistic. Robert Mayer has noted that even if historical writers in the period embraced rigorous research methods, they could reject the disinterested stance we today demand from "modern" historiography.[138] In the context of Jacobean England, it was possible for historical writers such as Edmund Bolton to combine nimble scholarly erudition with the blunt object of ideological raillery.

[136] Blackburn, "Edmund Bolton's 'London, King Charles His Augusta, or City Royal'", 316.
[137] Woolf, "Bolton, Edmund Mary", ODNB.
[138] Mayer, *History and the early English novel*, 33.

In *Nero Caesar; or Monarchie Deprav'd* (1624), we find the most in-depth and sustained account of Boudica completed before the nineteenth century. The work was not formally an account of Boudica, but rather focused its narrative on the life and reign of Emperor Nero, usually viewed as the least forgivable of the Roman tyrants. Yet it proved difficult for later readers to accept Nero as the primary focus of the work. An eighteenth-century reader of *Nero Caesar* summarised the text as being about "…the affairs of Britain from the time of Julius Caesar to the revolt under Nero. The author relates the history of Boadicea & endeavours to prove that Stonehenge was a monument erected to her memory."[139] The reference to Stonehenge was an invention of Bolton's which will be discussed below.

Bolton devoted nearly half the book to a discussion of the Boudican rebellion that broke out in the middle of Nero's reign. He immediately introduces Boudica as a central character in the narrative in the frontispiece of the work (see Figure 2). The illustration was the work of Francis Delaram, a prominent figure in the London engraving trade from about 1615-1624. Very little else is known of him beyond the forty-seven of his works which still survive, among them one of Queen Elizabeth and a large portrait of James I.[140] Delaram's engraving appeared in the 1627 edition of *Nero Caesar* but not in the earlier one. The frontispiece is dominated by two female figures on the left and right of the image. The figure on the left represents "Roma", and shows a woman in a sheer classical costume, her breasts clearly visible and the fabric clinging to

[139] This appears as marginalia in a copy of the 1624 edition of *Nero Caesar*, British Library shelfmark 196.e.15. It is impossible to identify the author of this note or even to date it with certainty. The shelfmark suggests that the copy was formerly in the library of George III, and an orange stamp tells us it was donated to the British Library collections between 1768 and 1944. An eighteenth-century origin for the handwritten text seems most likely.

[140] A. Griffiths, "Delaram, Francis (*fl.* 1615–1624)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7445, accessed 20 Nov 2012] See also A. Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain, 1603-1689* (London: British Museum Press, 1998) 53.

every curve of the body. She holds in her hand a spear and she is leaning on a shield emblazoned with the familiar Roman moniker "SPQR" – "The Senate and the People of Rome". Her armoured right foot is resting on a globe, representative of Rome's domination over the world at large. However, the woman is not a representation of the empire itself but rather of the city of Rome. On her head she is wearing a headdress in the shape of the city. Her hair forms intricate plumes that rise from its towers and parapets, a representation of Rome in flames. Above her is a framed oval portraying Nero's agents murdering the wicked emperor's mother, Agripinna.

On the right side of the frontispiece opposite Roma stands the female figure "Londinium", whose own modest style of dress contrasts sharply with Roma's. The drapery is opaque and voluminous, allowing for none of the provocative showiness of the Roman figure. Londinium is armed with a sheathed sword at her belt. She is leaning on what appears to be a horn of plenty with an anchor lying at her feet, denoting London's status as a prosperous city of commerce and sea trade, perhaps even prior to the coming of the Romans.[141] Like Roma, Londinium is wearing a headdress formed of a cityscape in which her hair is tangled and jutting outward to represent the conflagration that would engulf London during Boudica's rebellion. Londinium is also standing below a framed scene, this one of Boudica standing before the Britons. Again as Holinshed's woodcut had, this shows Boudica when she is delivering her rousing oration to the assembled Britons before the showdown with Suetonius Paulinus. Bolton describes the scene in his verse "Argument of the Severall Pictures in the Frontispeice":

[141] Bolton's pet interest was the history of the city of London, and it was especially important to him that London's glory was proved to be of native British making, not the product of Roman endeavour. See E. Bolton, *Vindiciae Britannicae, or, London righted by rescues or recoveries of antiquities of Britain in general and of London in particular, against unwarrantable preiudices, and historical antiquations among the learned* (c. 1628). The manuscript was entrusted to John Selden, but thought to have been lost. London Metropolitan Archives. CLC/270/MS03454.

> In the next oval brave Bonduca pleads,
> To her bold Britanns, nor the forces dreads,
> Of Rome supream, but Armies injuries takes,
> And Roman London, heaps of ashes makes,
> In part of that round vengeance which shee meant,
> To Nero's party here, and Fates prevent...[142]

Clearly Bolton had encountered John Fletcher's *Tragedie of Bonduca*, and adopted his interpretation of her name in this instance. This trend was not sustained throughout the work, so the reason for Bolton's initial preference for "Bonduca" over "Boadicia" is unclear. Bolton uses the two interchangeably, though he seemed to marginally prefer "Boadicia". The negative portrayal of Boudica in Fletcher's work seems to have done nothing to dissuade Bolton of the historical interest to be found in Boudica and the ancient Britons, nor did it dampen his enthusiasm for her patriotic actions. The last line of the "Argument" refers to Boudica's eventual defeat, which Bolton here attributes to the vicissitudes of fate. This contrasts somewhat with Bolton's interpretations of the defeat found later in the text.

After these opening verses and a dedication to the Duke of Buckingham, Bolton focused on the first five years of Nero's reign up to the murder of queen Agrippina, Nero's mother. The second book shifts to a detailed analysis of the causes and consequences of Boudica's mutiny in Britain which, "as affording great lessons" in Bolton's estimation, dominates much of the book. Such pronouncements on Bolton's part should give us some pause in light of Alan Bradford's assessment of Bolton as "anti-Tacitean", at least in his approach to historical practice. Bolton's insistence on the didactic value of the rebellion reflects his own internalisation of the Tacitean approach to history writing. This is also evidenced by the book's deep reading of Nero's first five

[142] E. Bolton, *Nero Caesar, or Monarchie Depraved, an historicall worke* (London: Thomas Walkley, 1624) "The Argument of the Severall Pictures in the Frontispiece".

years. Bolton showed a clear interest in analysing the emperor's follies and he made no attempt to hide Nero's brutality toward the imperial family or the people of Rome.

Extending beyond "politic" history, Bolton also took into account the more minute details of Boudica's rebellion, mixing antiquarian precision with occasional remarks on the relative merits of different historical writers from Tacitus to William Camden. Over 120 pages out of a total of 215 were devoted to Boudica's motivations, and to the character and personality of the individual Roman generals involved in the action; but Bolton also displayed his antiquarian credentials in his lengthy discourses on the tactics taken by each side, the movements of troops, and even gathered evidence to conjecture as to the time of year at which the rebellion occurred. Bolton left space for the inclusion of numismatic illustration, a favourite subject for antiquarians, though the final version did not include them, perhaps for reasons of cost.

We can see Bolton's antiquarian interest and Tacitean methodology in *Nero Caesar*. But he was also insistent that his work was one of fact, and sought to show the true nature of events. Bolton opened the work by stating that:

> The office of an Historian is not more worthie then [sic] it is hard. But the hardnesse, as it riseth from the greater necessity of truth, then of eloquence, is recompensed with an advantage above all other sorts of humane learning. For each of those is but for certain natures; whereas History is a common study for all…The difficulties grow out of the abstruse condition of causes, counsels, facts, and their circumstances. And howsoever lights may faile, yet truth is the supreame aime of every right narrationer.[143]

The appearance of these words in the dedication to the Duke of Buckingham only highlights the fact that this work was also a form of propaganda with a clear ideological position in favour of James I, and of monarchy in general. Undoubtedly, one of Bolton's objectives was to glorify monarchy as a form of government by showing that even in its

[143] Bolton. *Nero Caesar*, Dedication to the Duke of Buckingham.

most depraved form, exemplified by Nero, the most patriotic rebels (here played by the ancient Britons, toward whom one might assume the British reader would be sympathetic) could not possibly triumph. In tandem with this was the idea that "common cause" endangered the natural order. But rather than see this as a form of conscious propaganda "masquerading" as scholarship, I would argue that Bolton was attempting to provide a sincerely reasoned argument for absolutism based on historical evidence.[144] Bolton firmly believed that his facts pointed him in this direction. One might argue that it is the task of the modern historian to unmask this intent, but there is not much unmasking to be done: the intent is fairly clear. What is less clear but of equal value to the modern historian is Bolton's sense of his own historical practice.

But even if his evidence might have pulled him in a different direction, it seems certain that Bolton was himself not without sympathy for Boudica's rebellion. He saw her as a figure in whom the British reader could take patriotic pride. However, the warning was clear: Boudica's was a good cause gone wrong. Certainly, her grievances were legitimate and Nero was a "bad" monarch, and the British tribes, once enemies, had successfully banded together "under a most glorious title, the *recoverie of common libertie*".[145] But they soon fell to rapine, "quite blotting out all the splendours of their favourable cause, with the foulness of their carriage."[146] For Bolton, such an outcome was inevitable when the enemy was a monarch, though he allowed for the possibility of

[144] This is, perhaps, not dissimilar from John Locke's attempts to show that the truth of Christianity was supported by reason. See the discussion of "Cultural elaboration of 'Fact'" in Shapiro, *Culture of fact*, 189ff.
[145] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 151. Emphasis in original.
[146] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 151.

failures unique to Boudica's femininity, a position by which previous readings of the work have been much distracted.[147]

Bolton's pro-monarchism was in opposition to the potentially anti-monarchist position engendered by Senecan philosophy. Thus he reacted to the popularity of Senecan philosophy among anti-monarchists and pointed to a direct link between Boudica and Seneca that went unacknowledged by the much-revered Tacitus. However, the link was real, supported by evidence. Tacitus identified Seneca as at least in part responsible for the simmering resentment felt by British tribesmen during the reign of Nero. Raphael Holinshed had also pointed this out in the *Chronicles*, but only in passing. Holinshed had found his evidence in the Greek historian Dio Cassius, who, as noted in the introduction to this thesis, set out the way in which Seneca was culpable much more explicitly than Tacitus had. According to Cassius, Seneca, in his role as a key advisor to Nero, was able to force usurious loans on the tribes of Britain and he demanded repayment on unreasonable terms. It was this new injustice coupled with the appalling treatment of Boudica and her daughters at the hands of the Romans that precipitated the rebellion in AD61.

Bolton was at pains to point out the role of Seneca in precipitating the rebellion in Britain. As an anti-Neostoic supporter of James I, Bolton lacked any sympathy with Seneca, who was, as we have seen, identified by Bolton's contemporaries as a martyr to the idea of resistance to monarchical whim. Bolton may even have taken some pleasure in pointing out the much-revered Seneca's role in the abuse of the Britons, rendering his heroism amongst supports of the contemporary "common cause" ironic. Bolton's editorial comment on the issue also peremptorily defended against those who might

[147] Frénée-Hutchins, *Representations*.

potentially criticise his reliance on Dio Cassius for the details of Seneca's wrong-doing. "I blush to write it!" he states when he comes to the discussion of the "cruel usuries" extracted against the Britons. "Yet this is he [Seneca] (o strange) who cryed out, when hee was at richest *How unknown a good is povertie*! But Dio is suspected by some of the most noble clarks of our age, as somewhat too unequall to the honour, and memorie of famous Seneca, the sharpest witt of Rome."[148] This final comment is almost certainly a sarcastic barb aimed at the veneration of Tacitus to the exclusion of other ancient historians by Bolton's contemporaries, as well as at Seneca, the prophet of anti-monarchical Neostoicism at the court of James I.

Previous scholars who work on this period of Boudica's reputation have not identified this connection between Tacitean historiography, Neostoicism, and Boudica's early "prehistory". Similarly, scholars working on Tacitean historiography and Neostoic influence have rarely acknowledged the tangential relationship these had to one of the most famous of British heroines. But because I have chosen to view history not as a discipline, but as a form of culture (and, more precisely, a culture of fact, in Barbara Shapiro's terminology) I have been able to recover this hitherto unknown side of Boudica's seventeenth-century character. The connection between Boudica and "serious" historiography and political thought must be made because it reveals the discursive nature of historical culture in this early period. It also reveals the shortcomings of previous readings of Boudica's reputation in the period, and serves as a warning against assuming that undertones of misogyny and fear of female power governed the production of historical narrative.

[148] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 98. Emphasis in original.

Alan Bradford has shown that Edmund Bolton's *Nero Caesar* may have been completed as early as 1622, when it is believed the author gave the manuscript to James I to personally correct and expand or redact.[149] If Bradford is correct, rather than dissuade Bolton from devoting half his book to Boudica, James left much, possibly even all of it intact. Bolton shared the prejudices of his time – this seems unavoidable – so we do see some evidence of gendered language and suspicion of female rule. But we also encounter pronouncements along much more laudatory lines: "Boadicia notwithstanding [the barbarity of her actions] lives a name of glory among the fewest, for the great nobilitie of her pretenses, and the most roial qualitie of her undertakings, such as never any lady waged higher."[150] Far from writing Boudica out of British history, Edmund Bolton was instrumental in securing the future of an individual identity for her.

Thus far we have seen how Bolton used Boudica's rebellion as a way of discouraging "common cause" among his contemporaries, and of showing that monarchs, no matter how cruel, must be obeyed as God's appointed representatives on earth. We have also seen the influence that Tacitean ideas had on Bolton's own historical writing and his choice of subjects: Tiberius, Nero, and Boudica. But it is equally important to acknowledge Bolton's original contributions to the Boudica story, based on analysis of the available evidence, which have been among the more enduring outside the classical accounts. In *Nero Caesar*, Bolton conjectured that the chariot on which Boudica and her daughters rode was fitted with scythed wheels. This was due to the fact that Bolton found some extant evidence that chariots from the Romano-British

[149] A. T. Bradford, "Stuart absolutism," 139.
[150] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 193.

period were thusly outfitted.[151] This was enough to convince him that Boudica's own chariot must certainly have followed that design. The scythe-wheeled chariot might seem a point of minor antiquarian detail, merely evidence of yet another of Bolton's pet interests – there is probably some truth to this – but from the point of view of British historical culture, it was a significant addition to a story that was only just beginning to establish itself as a fixture of the British historical narrative. The most iconic depiction of Boudica, Thomas Thornycroft's statue situated on Westminster Bridge, portrays her chariot with scythed wheels, a direct but unacknowledged addition by Bolton to a myth still in gestation. This, it would seem, is the only element of Boudica's story to have successfully stuck.

The second point added by Bolton was part of a much wider debate current among other antiquarians of the time[152]: that Stonehenge marked Boudica's final resting place. Bolton's contemporaries were just beginning to investigate the origins and purpose of Stonehenge, with Camden having given it special attention in *Britannia*. For his part, Edmund Bolton was convinced that the stone circle was a monument to the dead hero-queen:

> ...no other toombe seems to mee so likely to be hers, as the admirable moniment of the stones upon Salisbury plain...Higher then to her no bookes doe reach, with any probabilitie of a person more capable of such a testimonie then she, and the profound oblivion which covers the author, and the first intention of reading them, where now they still defie the weather, doth strongly fortifie my supposition, that the stones were consecrated to the glory of Bonduca...[153]

Outside of *Nero Caesar*, Bolton took more than a passing interest in Boudica, as he often returns to her and the ancient Britons in other works, although it is not entirely

[151] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 171.
[152] See R. Hill, *Stonehenge* (London: Profile, 2008).
[153] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 182- 183.

clear why.[154] Even in his poetry Bolton could not resist the opportunity to mention his most original antiquarian hypothesis about Boudica and the origins of Stonehenge. In a work composed for the benefit of King Charles I,[155] Bolton states that while Stonehenge might possibly have associations with the goddess Diana, there was another potential reason for its construction:

> He, whosover, holdeth, that the same [Stonehenge],
> Was rais'd t'immortalise Bonduca's name,
> That martial Queen, shall have no foe of me…[156]

Bolton's controversial suggestion may have been an attempt to involve himself in this nascent debate and build up his profile in a scholarly community. But it also seems to suggest that Bolton had a curious respect for Boudica, an indication that she was not universally condemned by historical writers.

Part V. Thomas Heywood and shifts in historical culture

Few of Bolton's contemporaries in the scholarly community would seem to have supported his Stonehenge theory, and very few writers in later centuries referred to it again. But Bolton's contributions to Boudica's story gained some support a few decades after the publication of *Nero Caesar* in the work of the playwright Thomas Heywood (c. 1573-1641). Heywood's extensive variety of works in both prose and verse reveal the disparate generic make-up of historical culture in the seventeenth century. I argue here

[154] Bolton mentions her on the first page of his *Vindiciae Britannicae.*
[155] *London, King Charles his Augusta, or, City Royal* (London: 1647)
[156] Ibid.

that Thomas Heywood's work on Boudica presents an early example of popular historical culture, hard on the heels of the "serious" work done by Bolton.

It is possible that Thomas Heywood's interest in Boudica initially came from his more general interest in women as dramatic and historical actors. Heywood's dramatic works often focused on female characters in domestic settings.[157] In addition to works that focused on ordinary women, Heywood wrote history plays in which he explored the lives of female characters, most notably *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1604-5), which dramatised the early years of Queen Elizabeth up to the defeat of the Spanish Armada. His work showed a keen and sustained interest in the theme of honourable femininity, whether embodied by good wives or great queens.

Heywood also produced prose works that were more straightforwardly historical and biographical; that is, "factual". According to Louis B. Wright, Heywood was "cognizant of the value of history for patriotic teaching and wished to present it in a brief and accurate form for the benefit of the general public."[158] Heywood's prose work *Gunaikeion* (1624) purported to be a history of the entire female sex and was republished in 1657 under the title *A General History of Women*.[159] Strangely, Boudica did not appear in that work, which might lead us to the somewhat unconvincing conclusion that Heywood had not encountered her at that early date. This seems unlikely because of his closeness to the theatre and the coincidence of his career with John Fletcher's. It is tantalising to conjecture that he did not include Bonduca in his work because he did not know that Fletcher's character was a "historical" one. But

[157] David Kathman, 'Heywood, Thomas (*c.*1573–1641)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13190, accessed 16 Feb 2010]
[158] L.B. Wright. "Heywood and the popularizing of History*". Modern Language Notes*. 43:5 (1928) pp. 287-293.
[159] R. G. Martin, "A critical study of Thomas Heywood's 'Gunaikeion'", *Studies in Philology,* (1923) 160-183.

whatever the reason, the fact that Boudica did not appear in that work was not due to a lack of admiration for her on Heywood's part. He gave her pride of place in one of his final publications, *The Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts of Nine of the Most Worthy Women of the World* (1640). It was based on the tradition of the "nine worthies", collections of heroic characters that had been in production since the fourteenth century. There was a separate and more static set of "nine worthy men" which appeared alongside a selection "nine worthy women"; the content of the latter was more variable.[160]

Heywood's portrayal of Boudica in *The Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts* has more in common with Edmund Bolton's *Nero Caesar* than it does with John Fletcher's *The Tragedie of Bonduca*. Heywood intended the work to be a factual, biographical account of Boudica's character and appearance. Heywood presented a very different image of the warrior queen from that of John Fletcher, focusing on the injustices done to her and on her bravery and patriotism. It also differs from Edmund Bolton's lengthy account in that it is solely about Boudica and not part of a larger narrative of the Roman occupation of Britain, or of early British history. Heywood tells his readers nothing of Julius Caesar's initial conduct in Britain or of contemporary events in Rome. It seems clear that Heywood was writing in a different mode from either the antiquarian/historian Edmund Bolton, or the playwright John Fletcher.

Even so, aside from the omission of the Romano-British contextual background, Heywood's narrative of Boudica was taken entirely from Edmund Bolton's *Nero Caesar*. At times Heywood lifted whole phrases and passages from the earlier work,

[160] C.T. Wright, "The Elizabethan Female Worthies," *Studies in Philology*, (1946) 628-643, p. 628.

whose author had been, we suspect, dead for seven years. The only truly original portion of Heywood's version was the opening verse in which he wrote:

> Witness this British Queene, whose masculine spirit
> Shall to all future, glorious fame inherit,
> Beyond all tongues or pens[161], who may be proud,
> Not thunders voice, can speake it self more loud,
> Of whom, although our moderne Authors wrote
> But sparingly, least they should seeme to dote
> Too much upon their Natives, forraigne inke
> Hath been so lavish, it would make man thinke
> Her valour inexpressible…[162]

This castigation of "moderne" authors was an odd way to begin an account that was nothing more than a condensed version of the work previously done by Bolton, whom Heywood later called "a worthy and very learned Authour."[163] Heywood's retelling of the tale certainly bore the mark of a playwright, with flowery turns of phrase evident on almost every page, and it was clearly intended for a wider audience than Bolton's *Nero Caesar* had been. Like Bolton's work, Heywood's account of Boudica's story presents further evidence against the argument that Boudica was removed from the British historical narrative by authors fearful either of the power of the Stuart kings or the return of petticoat government. Heywood pronounced "Bonduca" to be, "one of the bravest Shee Worthyes in the whole universe: her death was grievously lamented of all her surviving friends, who honoured her funerall with most stately Rites, and buryed her remaines ambitiously brave…" Heywood repeated Bolton's assertion that Stonehenge marked the place of Boudica's burial. "…now concerning the place of interrment, as

[161] Even this phrase would seem to echo Bolton's "higher then to her no bookes doe reach".
[162] T. Heywood, *Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts of Nine of the Most Worthy Women of the World* (London: J. Marshall, 1640) 68.
[163] Heywood, *Exemplary Lives*, 75.

may be gathered from the premises it was the admirable monument of the stones upon Salisbury Plaine, not being any worke of the Romans, but of the Brittaines..."[164]

Bolton's influence was also evident in Heywood's visual portrayal of Boudica (see Figure 3). Interestingly, the portraits in Heywood's *Exemplary Lives* were not made for the work, which suggests that it was not by Heywood's doing that the visual portrayal of Boudica fitted the physical description given by Bolton. The illustrative plates found in Heywood's *Exemplary Lives* were originally published between 1634 and 1639, together with short, four-line verses to explain the women pictured, under the title *Nine Worthy Women*. They were the work of George Glover (fl. 1634-1652), creator of other popular sets of illustrations, including the five senses, the seven deadly sins and the nine liberal arts.[165] Glover's set of women worthies was divided into "Three Jewes, Three Heathens, and Three Christians". Strangely, Glover counted Boudica – or "Bonditia", as he called her – as a Christian, while Heywood grouped her with the heathens. Glover's other two Christians were Queen Margaret and Queen Elizabeth. It seems the criterion for Christianity was merely that the woman be a British queen.

Glover's was the first original "portrait" of Boudica to show her divested of her context – there is no army gathered around her, as had been the case in Holinshed's woodcut. Glover's work depicted Boudica as being of large stature, which conformed to the description given by Dio Cassius. Other elements of the portrait appear to have followed the description given by Bolton in *Nero Caesar*: "Her face naturalie good, and full of dignitie… Her complexion verie faire. Which who will wonder at in a Ladie borne in BRITAIN? Her copious tresses dangling in compasse farre beneath her waste,

[164] Heywood, *Exemplary Lives*, 92.
[165] A. Griffiths, *The print in Stuart Britain*, 103; M. Jones, *The print in early modern England: an historical oversight* (London: Yale University Press, 2010) 42.

were of a most bright yellow…"[166] Elsewhere Bolton had stated, "Holinshed in her printed picture sets a crowne of gold upon her as a finall ornament; and it displeatheth not; though authoritie wants. An helme with a coronet, and a plume of feathers more proper…"[167] It is in this form of headwear that Boudica appears in Glover's print. It also follows Bolton's assertion that "her shoulders sustained upon them a militarie cloake, or a thicke wrought mantle, buttond before, her goodlie tresses flowing in length downe her back…"[168] Such a cloak is visible in Glover's print. Antony Griffiths has speculated that George Glover designed his own plates, as was true of his "Five Senses",[169] and the set of women worthies may have been another example of Glover's own design. It is almost certain that Glover, or perhaps an anonymous designer, based this first detailed portrait of Boudica on a combination of Dio Cassius's description, which Bolton included in *Nero Caesar*, and the embellishments Bolton provided himself. This may be taken as evidence that Bolton's account was current in Jacobean London before Thomas Heywood popularised it.

The conclusion to be drawn from this interaction between the works of Edmund Bolton, Thomas Heywood, and George Glover would seem to be that long before the advent of "popular history" attributed to later periods, the past was being popularised by means that have gone unrecognised by historians of history, as well as scholars of literature. One historian has said that ordinary people continued to absorb much of their historical knowledge from almanacs well into the early eighteenth century, and that it was not until the political conflicts of the Walpole era that history was pressed into

[166] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 101.
[167] Bolton, *Nero Caesar*, 114.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Griffiths, *Print in Stuart Britain,* 108.

partisan service, thereby creating a new level of historical awareness.[170] What, then, of Shakespeare's history plays, or for that matter Thomas Heywood's biographical work, or even Glover's images? These present evidence of historical awareness in a much earlier period, although how one might measure that is debateable. But those works maintained and circulated ideas about the past, and they invite extensive consideration by historians of historical culture.

Part VI. Conclusion

Boudica's origins in classical history, and more importantly the implications they had for seventeenth-century audiences, have not been fully investigated in previous scholarship about her reputation. Even those who have recognised Tacitus's work as the main source for the limited knowledge posterity has had of Boudica have not shown how her reputation emerged from the relatively short-lived discourse of Neostoicism that interest in Tacitus had engendered during the first century of her posthumous life. While some scholars have attempted to locate Boudica in debates about female power in the aftermath of Elizabeth's long reign, this gives us a limited understanding of the full extent of Boudica's significance in the period. She was not simply a reflection of Elizabeth, or a synecdoche for femininity in an age of masculine anxiety; she was her own individual character, excavated from sources which had a venerable classical pedigree. She was given a life of her own in works that crisscrossed the spectrum of historical culture.

Robert Mayer has rightly argued that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fact and fiction were "compatible elements in even the most progressive,

[170] C. Gerrard, *The patriot opposition to Walpole: politics, poetry, and national myth, 1725-1742* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 101-102.

rigorous forms of historical discourse."[171] The example of Boudica amply demonstrates how fact and fiction worked together to form an idea of a historical character. John Fletcher's *Bonduca* was consciously a work of fiction, probably taken from Raphael Holinshed, whose *Chronicles* had also inspired Fletcher's friend and collaborator, William Shakespeare. Writers who wrote after *The Tragedie of Bonduca* were aware of the work – as evidenced by Bolton and Heywood's repetition of Fletcher's invented spelling "Bonduca" – but did not repeat his fictionalised aspects of the story. Edmund Bolton chose to investigate Boudica as an exercise in Tacitean history writing, and he married that to an antiquarian's interest in fieldwork and material remains. Crucially, the opportunities Boudica's story afforded him for glorifying James I and discouraging the sort of rebellion bred by Lipsian Neostoicism were not incompatible with his passion for antiquarian research and historical truth.

Given his interest in female characters and bringing historical knowledge to a wide audience, there is no real mystery behind Thomas Heywood's interest in Boudica the individual. Inspired by the work of Edmund Bolton which had, it would seem, circulated beyond readers immediately surrounding James I, Heywood created the first factual, but still heroic account of Boudica intended for a popular audience. While Bolton's *Nero Caesar* was intended as a work of scholarly or courtly interest, Heywood's verses and portraits of worthy women would have attracted a very different readership. And unlike Fletcher's equally accessible but heavily fictionalised *Bonduca*, Heywood's version of the individual was unassailably heroic, and included a detailed visual depiction of a majestic, if exotic-looking, British warrior queen. All of this is revealing of a more complex vision of Boudica in seventeenth-century Britain.

[171] Mayer, *History and the early English novel*, 54.

In the chapters which follow, I continue to trace Boudica in British historical culture. The seventeenth-century revolutions and political uncertainty of the period curtailed some elements of historical culture, notably the performance of plays (historical or otherwise), and in the period following, we see a marked increase in works that engaged with questions of sovereignty and liberty. Boudica did not go unnoticed by commentators in this vein – especially John Milton, who was not well-disposed toward her, as we will see – and her antiquity occasionally worked against her in an age preoccupied by constitutional questions.

Chapter Two

Emotion and faction: the popular national narrative in historical culture, 1696-1760

The aim of this chapter is to reveal the ways in which Boudica's story was circulated in the period after the English Civil Wars, from 1696 to about 1760. The reason for this chronological shift is that there were few noteworthy appearances by Boudica in the period following Thomas Heywood's *Exemplary Lives* in the 1640s. The exception, discussed below, was John Milton's *History of Britain* published in the 1670s. The ban on theatres and the general political upheavals of the period may have contributed to what could be described as a lull in the growth of historical culture, or at least the facets of it that we can discover through Boudica's example. But by the 1690s, there appeared a whole new body of material in which Boudica was a consistent presence: national histories. Christine Gerrard's assessment cited at the end of the previous chapter is that historical ideas were still mostly unknown to ordinary people, and access to historical knowledge was limited to almanacs and sermons.[172] But there is some basis for questioning this, given the number of national histories published in the late seventeenth century and well into the eighteenth century. As Milton's *History of Britain* and numerous other new histories produced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries demonstrate, the national narrative first brought to the British public by Raphael Holinshed, John Speed, William Camden, and other seventeenth-century writers, was taking on a growing importance by the end of that century.

[172] Gerrard, *Patriot opposition*, 101-102. I have not found many references to Boudica in either of those genres, but further research into the period may prove revealing.

This development has been noted before by historians of history. J.G.A Pocock's *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* is the most famous explanation of the importance of political events to historical thought in the seventeenth century.[173] F. Smith Fussner has concluded that the reason behind the growth in the number of histories written in the years after the English revolution was that questions were being asked about the balance of the English constitution and the nature of power and government, and it was presumed that the answer could be found in the story of the evolution of the nation's institutions.[174] Christine Gerrard's assessment that history became more partisan during the mid-century is certainly plausible, but it should not render invisible the popular aspects of national histories in the period prior to the mid-eighteenth century. The extent to which partisan histories were also popular histories shorn of their political insinuations by audiences who may not have been attuned to their political aspects will form part of the discussion in this chapter.

Locating the origins of government involved looking back to the distant past, and this in turn meant that the national narrative was becoming the purview of a larger group of writers with primarily political interests.[175] But these were not only scholarly, or politically high-minded discourses on historical precedent. The growth in the market for published narrative histories at the end of the seventeenth century is perhaps the most significant aspect of British historical culture after the Civil Wars, but one which is often overlooked in favour of intellectual histories of history, and excavations of political discourse and debate as it played out in works of history. But this explosion in

[173] J.G.A. Pocock, *The ancient constitution and the feudal law: a study of English historical thought in the seventeenth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
[174] F. Smith Fussner, *The historical revolution*, pp. 106-110.
[175] For a thorough discussion of the debates around the ancient constitution in this period see Kidd, *British identities*, 75-98.

the number of narratives of British (or often English) history was the key way in which Boudica's story continued to circulate in the eighteenth century. As we have seen, Boudica was an inheritance from the works of Tacitus and could not be excised from historical narratives in the same way as King Arthur or Brutus.

The Enlightenment principles of Voltaire, Montesquieu and others in mid-eighteenth-century France and the impact these had on history writing have been of primary importance to historians of history. The conventional narrative sees new trends in political thought, philosophical development, and rational enquiry growing and inevitably influencing history writing in England in the context of Enlightenment Europe.[176] Denys Hay conceived of "western historiography" as a monolithic concept that could be studied in a holistic way. He did not view Britain or England as a distinct context, and instead focused on the European origins of English historiography. The view that the Enlightenment had the most crucial and visible impact on history writing throughout Europe was also put forward earlier and forcefully by Hugh Trevor-Roper in a series of essays first published in the 1960s, and recently republished in a new edition in 2010. In his essays, Trevor-Roper made the connection between Enlightenment principles and the shift in historical practice in Europe more widely, arguing that eighteenth-century "philosophical historians" saw themselves as a breed apart from their uncritical, if erudite predecessors of the seventeenth century.[177]

But taking a broadly European or western view of historiography obfuscates national difference in the production of historical cultures. It could be argued that more than any other sphere of intellectual activity in this period, the production of historical

[176] D. Hay, *Annalists and historians: western historiography from the eighth to the eighteenth centuries* (London: Methuen Co Ltd, 1977).
[177] H. Trevor-Roper, J. Robertson (ed), *History and Enlightenment* (London: Yale University Press, 2010).

cultures was predicated on the idea of national exceptionalism, and by failing to recognise this fact we distort our own view of eighteenth-century historical culture in Britain and elsewhere. Gerald Newman might say that such a view reflects unconscious repetition of one of the central myths of English nationalism: the essential eccentricity of the English people.[178] However, Newman's attempt to show that there is such a thing as an English form of nationalism meant that he was reliant on what he termed the underlying "nationalism" of the "new" historiography of Britain, which he locates in the late eighteenth century.[179] This suggestion that histories were "nationalist" belies the importance of inward-looking, parochial narratives of the national past to writers and audiences (in Britain, but also throughout Europe and the world), rendering an argument against exceptional national-historical cultures somewhat problematic.

There have of course been studies that have focused solely on English or British history writing in the eighteenth century.[180] However, historians of British historiography often share with Hays and Trevor-Roper the tendency to take a teleological view of historical scholarship. This has led once again to a focus on a "canon" of historical writers, the predecessors to modern historiography. J.G.A. Pocock's magisterial study, now at five volumes, of Edward Gibbon is a case in point. Pocock grants Gibbon the status of "great man" of history writing, understandably, but

[178] G. Newman, *The rise of English nationalism: a cultural history, 1740-1830* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997) xxiii.
[179] Newman, *English nationalism*, 115.
[180] T. P. Peardon, *The transition in English historical writing* (New York: AMS Press, 1966 [First ed. 1933]); L. Okie, *Augustan historical writing: histories of England in the English Enlightenment* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1991); P. Hicks, *Neoclassical history and English culture: from Clarendon to Hume* (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1996); A. Patterson, *Nobody's perfect: a new whig interpretation of history* (London: Yale University Press, 2002). For Scotland, see C. Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's past: Scottish whig historians and the creation of an Anglo-British identity, c. 1689-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Kidd emphasizes the importance of historiography to Scottish identity, a point not made forcefully enough by other historians of national identity. Also, Kidd's notion that there existed a "basic scheme" (p. 25) of Scottish history that could act as a foundation for opposing ideologies is, it would seem, one way of acknowledging that the past was an independent body of facts: interpretable, but not subject to invention or being monopolised by a single group.

an exhaustive study of one historical writer, or even a small body of writers, can only shed so much light on the discipline, and even less on any wider interest in the past. Others have also shown this tendency toward teleology. Philip Hicks has argued that David Hume, along with Edward Gibbon, were the inheritors of the legacy of classicism and therefore the precursors to modern historical practice. As the only British historians to publish works of neoclassical history, Hicks considered them the most "successful" of British historians.[181]

Scholars have also noted the influence of the Enlightenment, the Scientific Revolution, and "rationalism, empiricism, scepticism and progress" on British historical writers in the eighteenth century.[182] The effect was to set them apart from their seventeenth-century predecessors who, by contrast were consumed by the idea that God was the agent behind all human activity. Edward Gibbon, historian of Rome, William Robertson, historian of Scotland and America, and David Hume, historian of Britain, loom large in discussions of eighteenth-century "philosophical" history, or history writing that sought to understand the past through a secular, non-providentialist mode of thought, as well as consider themes outside the realm of great men and high politics.[183] For Hicks, Gibbon and Hume most closely approached this ideal. Historians of history who have moved beyond Hume and Gibbon, as Laird Okie has done, have taken particular interest in revealing the political affiliations of the authors. Okie did not attempt to ascertain what such works might have meant in a larger cultural milieu in

[181] Hicks. *Neoclassical history and English culture*, 211.
[182] "Introduction: Eighteenth-century British historians", E. Jenkins. (ed). *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, v. 336. (London: Thomson Gale, 2007) xvii. Arguably, the stark differences between eighteenth- and seventeenth-century historical writers it not so stark. As we have seen, even the Catholic Edmund Bolton was driven to present evidence to support God's will at work.
[183] Hay calls them the "triumvirate" of British historians. Hay, *Annalists and historians*, 175.

which the past was significant for more than just the politically engaged or enfranchised.[184]

Such approaches have left many gaps in our understanding of eighteenth-century historical culture. Historical discourse was not solely the property of "enlightened" scholars; this had not been the case in the seventeenth century, and neither was it so in the eighteenth. Rather, interest in the past had been growing before the Civil War period, and continued to grow independently of the Enlightenment in England. Although it was concomitant with the spread of Enlightenment ideas, the reasons for the expansion of historical culture need not have been scholarly, or motivated by political interest on an individual level. While celebrating the neoclassical histories of Hume and Gibbon, Phillip Hicks did so at the expense of other, unnamed, histories which, he claims, did much to "trivialize" history writing in the eighteenth century. The public, he claims, lacked high-minded motives for reading history and therefore supported its trivialization.[185] Professional historians have privileged the writers whom they see as their intellectual predecessors; in many ways this is a perfectly understandable position. But it has meant that the broader picture of a British public becoming aware of and invested in its history has become lost, or at least obscured.

After all, even David Hume's enlightened historical work became a best-seller, making him, as Denis Hays noted, "the harbinger of the historical best-seller of our own day."[186] Karen O'Brien has convincingly shown that there was a shift in the period 1700-1800, which amounted to the growth of a "history market", marked by the growth

[184] L. Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing: histories of England in the English Enlightenment*. For the popular appeal of "hack" histories and their political uses, see J. Black, "Ideology, history, xenophobia and the world of print in eighteenth-century England" in J. Black and J. Gregory (eds), *Culture, politics and society in Britain, 1660-1800* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991) 184-216.
[185] Hicks, *Neoclassical history*, 215.
[186] Hay, *Annalists and historians*, 175.

of a wide audience keen to read and to buy works of history.[187] O'Brien's conclusion that a "history market" developed in this period was echoed by Murray G. H. Pittock, who stated that history "found a mass market by linking its narrative of progress towards civility with aspirations towards economic, linguistic and career progress among its target audience. History had found its comfort zone."[188] This development in the period has also been recognised by Jeremy Black, who cautioned against making a distinction between "'enlightened' 'rational' history for an elite readership and xenophobic, vigorously written hack history for a mass readership" when some of the great "enlightened" histories of the day were so hugely successful.[189] Thus it seems there is room for an approach to history writing during this period which does not obviate the awareness and importance of the past for those outside an elite body of thinkers and writers, and which seeks to understand the "history market" described by Karen O'Brien more fully.

According to O'Brien, the years between 1700 and 1800 saw "the generic evolution of history from political narrative to civil history, then [in the mid-century] to a novelized kind of history incorporating biographical elements, anecdotes, and epistolary and other fiction formats.....Society, rather than the political realm, became the primary object of historical enquiry, reflecting and instigating changes in the composition of the readership for historical works."[190] O'Brien's assessment of the content of national histories is inspired by Mark Salber Phillips's recent work on the

[187] K. O'Brien, "The history market." I. Rivers. (ed), *Books and their readers in eighteenth-century England: new essays*. (London: Continuum, 2003) pp. 105-133.
[188] M.G.H. Pittock, "Enlightenment historiography and its legacy: plurality, authority and power" in H. Brocklehurst and R. Phillips (eds), *History, nationhood and the question of Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 33-44, p. 36.
[189] Black, "Ideology history, xenophobia", 207.
[190] O'Brien, "History Market", 110.

narratological questions which confronted historical writers in the period1740-1820. In his work, Phillips recognised the complexity and variety of the material that constituted historical writing, and explored the ways in which historical writers situated themselves within a "cluster of historiographical and parahistoriographical genres."[191] Phillips provided examples of how narratives of history became "sentimentalist experiments", especially where contemporary events were concerned. Put simply: "In the latter half of the eighteenth century… many writers reconceived the reader's engagement with the historical narrative in more inward and sentimental terms."[192] According to Phillips, intensely emotive language and pathetic description were employed by historical writers in the late eighteenth century, an inclusion that usually required some reliance on documentary evidence which gave a genuine glimpse into the inward life of the subject.[193] Of course the periodisation for such developments can never be hard and fast, and exceptions are almost inevitable. But one way we can reveal some of the nuances behind the increasing "sentimentality" of historical writing and emphasise the fluidity of periodisation is to focus on a suitable historical event or person which can act as a case study, rather than on a specific writer. Boudica's case seems well-suited to this endeavour.

But before proceeding any further in the discussion of Boudica and national histories, I will begin this chapter by considering two dramatic works from the very end of the seventeenth century, that by George Powell in 1696, and another by Charles Hopkins in 1697. In some cases, these two plays provided inspiration for embellished

[191] M.S. Phillips, *Society and sentiment: genres of historical writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000) 11-12.
[192] Phillips, *Society and sentiment*, 103.
[193] Phillips, *Society and sentiment*, 95-99.

elements of "factual" histories.[194] It is important to bear in mind that the factual and fictional aspects of what I am calling historical culture were recognised as distinct by contemporaries.[195] Using Boudica as a case study can be revealing of the relationship between the two. I will follow this with a more detailed discussion of some of the histories published before 1760, which will show how Boudica was assimilated into new trends in popular historical engagement, and also how writers of history engaged with her story on both a sentimental and a political level.

Part I. The new *Bonduca* (1696) and *Boadicea* (1697)

The last years of the seventeenth century were rich in dramatic portrayals of Boudica. Prior to the very end of the seventeenth century, the last (and first) dramatic production to feature Boudica had been John Fletcher's *Bonduca* of 1613, discussed in the previous chapter. The upheavals in the middle of the seventeenth century and the subsequent ban on the theatres had impacted public performance of plays but, as we have seen, Fletcher's *Bonduca* continued to sell in printed form throughout the century, and its availability is what likely led to its revision at end of the century. The revival in 1695 was the work of George Powell (1668-1714), an actor and playwright as well-known in his day for his drunkenness, womanising, and pugnacity as he was for his thespian accomplishments.[196] He dedicated his revised version of John Fletcher's 1613 *Bonduca* to Lord Jeffreys (1673-1702), the son of the more famous Judge Jeffreys. The second

[194] The literature around the relationship between history and fiction in this period is large, and other works on the subject have been cited above, but in particular see Levine,*The Battle of the Books*, 267ff; E. Zimmerman, *The boundaries of fiction: history and the eighteenth-century British novel* (London: Cornell University Press, 1996); Mayer, *History and the early English novel*.
[195] K. O'Brien, "History and the novel in eighteenth-century Britain" in P. Kewes (ed), *The uses of history in early modern England* (San Marino, CA: The Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 2006) pp. 389-405. 390
[196] P.R. Backscheider. "Powell, George". ODNB. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22647?docPos=2>

Lord Jeffreys, unlike his venerable father, died young and accomplished little of note. He was probably Powell's friend in drunken tomfoolery, and possibly his financial backer, whose name at the very least lent the work a connection to the London elite.

Being the "history of a British Heroine", it seemed only natural that Powell should dedicate his *Bonduca* to an English nobleman. George Powell was explicit about the intentions of his new Boudica play. "For where can our Noblest English Memoirs be more gracefully or more suitably lodged, than in the Hands of the Noblest English Honour? And it has this further Advantage, as being an English Story; That the Glory of Worthies, and Heroes found sweetest, where the Musick is Tuned at Home."[197] There is little doubt that Powell's intention was to appeal to British (or English) patriotism with his Boudica story. John Fletcher's original had contained some references to the British national character, such as Bonduca's dying pronouncement to her enemies that "If you will keep your Laws and Empire whole/Place in your Roman's Flesh, a British soul", a line repeated in Powell's version. But it would seem that even at this early stage, Boudica had become inextricably bound to a sense of patriotism. There will be more discussion of this in the next chapter, but for the present, we will restrict ourselves to the immediate story of the play's performance and reception.

Powell's *Bonduca* was performed at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane during the 1695-96 theatrical season, having been rushed into production to compete with the success of the rival theatre company at Lincoln's Inn Fields.[198] In his preface to the reworked version of John Fletcher's play, Powell stated that he called upon his more talented friend to provide the revisions while he cast himself in the male lead as

[197] G. Powell, *Bonduca, or the British heroine, a tragedy*, "Dedication" (London: Richard Bentley, 1696)
[198] C.A. Price, *Henry Purcell and the London stage*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 117. Powell also refers to a "war" between the two groups in his Preface.

Caratach.[199] Powell claimed that "the whole Play was revised quite through, and likewise studied up in one Fortnight".[200] This treatment did not reflect a lack of respect or enthusiasm for the subject matter of the play, or for its spiritual author, John Fletcher. Like many of his contemporaries, and the theatre manager George Colman late in the next century, Powell voiced disbelief that Fletcher's works had faded into relative obscurity: "The Value of the Original [Bonduca] is not unknown to those who have read it in Fletcher: A Value that has often times been prized so high, that the whole Brotherhood of the Quill have for many Years been blamed for letting so Ingenious a Relick of the Last Age, as Bonduca, lie dormant, when so inconsiderable an Additional Touch of the Pen was wanting, to make it for an Honourable Reception in This."[201] Powell's reference to reading rather than viewing the play shows how important this medium was for keeping alive dramatic works during the trials of the previous decades, and the extent to which Boudica might have been encountered through private reading rather than public performance.

Powell's somewhat rushed approach to his revision suggests that the play might have been thrown together in a conscious effort to draw an audience. The hurried nature of its production is itself a telling piece of evidence showing that Boudica may have been a draw for contemporary audiences who may have encountered her in printed editions of Fletcher's works, as well as in published histories. The play was performed at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in October 1695.[202] After its initial run, the play

[199] Price, *Henry Purcell*, 117.
[200] Quoted in A.C. Sprague, *Beaumont and Fletcher on the Restoration Stage* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926).
[201] G. Powell, *Bonduca; or the British Heroine, a tragedy acted at the Theatre Royal*, Preface to the Reader (London: 1696).
[202] *London Gazette*, 24-28 October 1695.

continued to be staged intermittently. It was acted again in 1699[203] and when it was performed in February 1706, it was advertised as "not Acted these Six Years".[204] It was revived at Drury Lane in August 1715, "not Acted these Ten Years"; it was performed in the summer of 1716, "At the particular Desire of several Persons of Quality who are going out of England."[205] It returned to the stage at Drury Lane in the summer of 1718, again advertised as "not Acted these Two Years".[206] There was one performance at the Haymarket in 1723, a benefit night for one of the theatre's actresses.[207] The final performance for Powell's play on record was in 1731, an event sometimes believed to have been a staging of Fletcher's original but was almost certainly Powell's version.[208]

Thus we see that from 1696 until about 1730, Powell's new edition of *Bonduca*, and thus Boudica herself, were sporadically but persistently present on the London stage. In addition to its staged performances, Powell's work, like Fletcher's before him, was printed and sold in quarto editions that were for sale across London. Advertisements for the play as a purchasable work appeared in a variety of newspapers, including the *Daily Courant*, a favoured organ for theatrical advertising, as well as the *Daily Advertiser*, the *Daily Journal*, and numerous other London dailies. Throughout the early decades of the eighteenth century, it was possible to purchase Powell's *Bonduca*, as well as many other dramatic works, for between four and six pence apiece. It is impossible to say how many of the plays were purchased during the period, but the consistency of advertising shows that there was at least some demand for the work

[203] van Lennep, *The London Stage*, Part I, Vol. I, 1660-1700, 508. (Carbondale, IL.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962)
[204] E. L. Avery. *TLS, Part II, Vol. I, 1700-1729*. (Carbondale, IL.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962) 117.
[205] Avery, *TLS*, Part II, Vol. II, 407.
[206] *Daily Courant*, 24 July 1718.
[207] Avery, *TLS*, Part II, Vol. II, 707.
[208] *Daily Post*, 8 June 1731.

across the reading public, as well as amongst theatre-goers. We will return to George Powell's play in the next chapter, when we will see how its rousing musical score came to permeate the mid- to late-eighteenth-century patriotic discourse into which Boudica came to be integrated.

The last Boudica play of the seventeenth century was also the most emotionally intense, and played on themes of violence and shame. Charles Hopkins's (c.1671-1700)[209] version of the play followed swiftly on from Powell's new *Bonduca* a year earlier, as well as John Seller's version of the story in his *History of England* (1696). Seller's history will be discussed below as one of the most "sentimental" visions of Boudica's story to be found in a "hack" history. Charles Hopkins was of Irish parentage and he maintained lifelong connections to Ireland. The play was dedicated to a Mr Congreve, Hopkins's fellow playwright William Congreve, who he may have met as early as 1686 when both men were at Trinity College, Dublin.[210] Hopkins also cast Congreve's mistress, Anne Bracegirdle, as Camilla, one of Boadicea's daughters. However, it is difficult to say whether his dedicatory poem to Congreve was meant to be taken with heavy sarcasm, given that Congreve was feuding with a number of his contemporaries.[211] Hopkins led a dissipated, sometimes violent life, and the promising playwright died young as a result.

Hopkins wrote *Boadicea, Queen of Britain* in 1697, and it was performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields "with very great Applause".[212] It was said that "The Author has sensibly touch'd the Passions; and Camilla's discovering her Rape, making the First

[209] B. Maxwell, "Notes on Charles Hopkins' *Boadicea*", *The Review of English Studies* (1928) 79-83; A.E. Jones, "A note on Charles Hopkins, c. 1671-1700", *Modern Language Notes* (1940) 191-194.
[210] Congreve was himself supported by Whig patrons. See A. Williams, "Patronage and Whig literary culture" in Womersley, *Cultures of Whiggism*, 149-172.
[211] R.J. Jordan, "Congreve and the Drury Lane Playwrights, 1698", *Modern Philology* (1982) 402-407.
[212] J. Giles, *The poetical register.* (London: 1719) 141.

Scene of the Fourth Act, is masterly perform'd."[213] Baldwin Maxwell has made a compelling case that Hopkins was more indebted to Powell and possibly to Fletcher than has been previously acknowledged,[214] but the work is much-changed and should be considered an original rather than a revision. The focus was on the fraught and sexually tense relationship between Boudica's daughters and the Roman invaders. In Hopkins's version, the young women have lost all taint of the barbarian given to them by John Fletcher, and were instead portrayed as refined young noblewomen. Of all the four Boudica plays written before 1800, and the first original since Fletcher's, Hopkins's is the most interesting in its in-depth treatment of Boudica and her family. He transformed the war between the Romans and the Britons from a political affair to a purely personal one, and provided more vivid portraits of Boudica and her daughters than previous authors had.

Hopkins endeavoured to complicate the characters of Boudica and her daughters by weaving a more intimate narrative of lust, tension between the sexes, and eventually shame and defeat. The issue most in evidence is that of sexual violence and tensions between the sexes, exacerbated by a political situation in which the conquered and the conquerors were in constant negotiation. When, in the course of the war, Decius abducts Boudica's daughter Camilla, the exchange between them is overshadowed by the constant and explicit threat of rape. When Camilla refuses Decius for the final time, Decius orders the soldiers to remove her from the scene while he informs the audience of his evil intentions. Hopkins has Camilla literally dragged kicking and screaming from the stage. This version of the story is far more explicit in its approach to the violence present in Boudica's story. Fletcher's *Bonduca* portrayed the daughters in a far less

[213] Giles, *Poetical register*, 141
[214] Maxwell, "Notes", 81.

sympathetic light; in fact, their barbarity seemed to imply some responsibility on their part for their fates. However, Camilla exhibits no such qualities. After Decius rapes her, she laments her shame and sorrow, and, begging for death, slinks away from the scene in anguish. Decius, on the other hand, is convinced that he has won her affections by his use of force, her secret desire all along. The audience is left in no doubt as to the shameful conduct of the Roman and the feminine virtue evident in Camilla's character. Caska, the duplicitous and conniving attendant to the Roman generals, plays the role of voicing disgust for the female sex generally. Yet it is his false counsel that leads to much of the protagonists' misfortune. In so doing Casks hopes to prove woman's naturally deceitful and fickle character, though he succeeds only in bringing ruin on Briton and Roman alike.

The intensity of Hopkins's play makes it worthy of note, but it was not an enduring addition to the theatrical repertoire. It was performed in 1697 and 1699 but does not appear to have been revived at any point afterward. Wendy Nielsen believes this was because the almost pacifistic message of the play, a product, she believes, of Hopkins's Anglo-Irish identity, did not appeal to audiences.[215] It is true that the play was not revived for performance, at least not from the extant evidence, but there are multiple references to it elsewhere. Demonstrative displays of "popularity", such as performance, are a poor, or at the very least a partial, gauge of a work's influence among contemporaries, let alone the significance of its subject matter. Hopkins was also the author of *The Art of Love; in two books, dedicated to the Ladies* first published posthumously in 1704, and then again in 1716. The work was accompanied by poems of praise from Hopkins's contemporaries, many of whom saw his death as a great loss.

[215] Nielsen, "Boadicea onstage", 602.

The title page names him as the author of the tragedy *Boadicea, Queen of Britain*, so it is not possible to say that the play had completely faded from memory. We find a reference to it in a comedy by Mr. John Leigh in 1720, in which a few lines from Hopkins's *Boadicea* were quoted and cited.[216] Admittedly George Powell was a better-known figure in the world of London theatre, and his play had the added *gravitas* of an association with John Fletcher and Henry Purcell. Hopkins's relative obscurity, while not as straightforward as previously thought, was arguably a function of the world of London theatre, and did not reflect attitudes towards the play's titular character, or even to Hopkins's perceive pacificism.

Hopkins's work was certainly emotive, and provided a detailed narrative of events for which there was little evidence. This sentimentality is hardly surprising in a work of fiction, but Powell's and Hopkins's works were not dissimilar to some of the histories being written at the end of the seventeenth and in the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. We have seen that histories written during this period have been subject to scrutiny by intellectual historians of the Enlightenment, and that the sentimentalisation of history has been identified as occurring in the late eighteenth century. But no historians have focused on the more emotive aspects of what I will call "panoramic" national histories from the end of the seventeenth century. Being amongst the most moving in the early history of Britain, Boudica's story was given some sentimentalised treatment in those works. The next section will show how dramatic fictions and factual narratives (with some drama thrown in) worked together to form an image of Boudica in British historical culture before 1760.

[216] J. Leigh, *Kensington-Gardens; or, the pretenders: a comedy* (London: E. Curll, 1720) 23.

Part II. Retelling Boudica's story in panoramic histories

I broadly agree with the assessment of the importance of sentimental history in the latter part of the eighteenth century, as related in the introduction to this chapter. But here I will argue that the embellishment of "fact" provided the opportunity to sentimentalize historical narratives beyond the period covered by the work of O'Brien and Phillips. As we will see below, the use of overtly emotive language caused some consternation amongst historical writers, and provided one basis for accusations of inaccuracy which were exchanged between them, especially those whose political opinions differed from one another. The impulse to employ sentimentalising language, I argue, was not entirely new in the late-eighteenth century, or a reaction to the rise of the novel. Instead I view it as a long-standing element of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century "popular" history writing. As Thomas Heywood's example showed, there had long been demand for works that engaged with the facts of history in a stimulating, sympathetic fashion.

Boudica's chronological position at the very "beginning" of British history has been the determining factor in which histories will be a part of this discussion. Focused narratives of relatively short periods of the recent past, such as Clarendon's the *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* (1702) and Catherine Macaulay's *The History of England from the Accession of James I to that of the Brunswick Line* (1763), will not be considered here for the simple reason that they did not mention Boudica. Instead, this chapter will focus on panoramic[217] national narratives that took in the entire period from the distant past to the present-day. These were the sorts of historical works produced by John Milton and David Hume. But there were many others besides,

[217] I use the word "panoramic" without reference to the growth of the use of panorama in visual culture evident in the later part of the eighteenth century. See S. Oettermann, *The panorama: history of a mass medium* (New York: Zone Books, 1997).

some of which will be discussed below. These other histories constitute what Jeremy Black has called "hack histories", but which are of interest to us because they circulated the Boudica story, usually as part of the whole narrative of British history.

Even though views of her role, or the role of the ancient Britons, expressed in panoramic national histories occasionally differed from one another, the very existence of such histories was crucial to the growth of historical knowledge in Britain, and therefore to any discussion of British historical culture during the period. As had been the case in the seventeenth-century texts by Holinshed and Heywood, images continued to be important in the eighteenth century, and many of the new panoramic histories were richly illustrated. Concomitant with Boudica's appearance in the texts of panoramic national histories, we see illustrations of Boudica occasionally accompanying the text, or even introducing histories of England and Britain as a frontispiece.

Boudica's appearance in national histories has been overlooked, even by literary scholars, whose treatment of seventeenth-century historical writers has been fairly assiduous.[218] There are no in-depth studies of Boudica as she appeared to eighteenth century audiences comparable to those about the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But Boudica's eighteenth-century appearance is far more complex than MacDonald's view allows. She asserted that, "Interest in Boadicea had been sporadic, and the reasons for this lie in her suitability as a symbol at different points in history. She once again became a focus of literary endeavour and patriotic sentiment in the latter half of the

[218] The other sphere in which Boudica is of interest to scholars has been in art historical studies of the Celtic Revival and the contemporaneous interest in the ancient Britons. Some aspects of the Celtic Revival will be discussed below, although Boudica's place in it is not as significant as one might assume. See S. Smiles, *The image of antiquity: ancient Britain and the Romantic imagination* (London: Yale University Press, 1994).

eighteenth century."[219] But MacDonald has misread the nature of Boudica's place in the period. MacDonald might not have been aware of the new plays produced between 1670 and 1780, but aside from that, it seems clear she did not view the ancient queen as an historical fact, but rather as a fictional character open to constant reinvention. As an accepted part of a narrative of British history, it was perfectly natural that Boudica should appear in factual histories more frequently than she did in fictions. The former have not been part of a discussion of Boudica's reputation in this period, and so this chapter attempts to uncover her role in those histories. Doing so is also revealing of an under-studied aspect of historical culture, "panoramic national histories".

Thus in this chapter, the conceptual framework of "historical culture" does the work of allowing us to consider both factual and fictional portrayals as part of the same process by which Boudica came to be known to the public, while neither opposing nor equating the two. It has also allowed us to see beyond the traditionally accepted chronology that regards the rise of the novel as paramount to history's distinction as a discipline. In addition, by viewing eighteenth-century histories as part of a broad historical culture, we can move past the immediate political preoccupations of historical writers in the period, so often accused of present-mindedness,[220] and instead focus on them as maintaining and circulating a broad schema of historical knowledge to a widening audience.

In this section I will consider specific depictions of Boudica in panoramic national histories, as well as some fictional works that elaborated on the factual idea of Boudica founded in history. I argue in what follows that we must look beyond the "canon" of great historical writers in this period to see that many of the sentimental, or

[219] MacDonald. "Boadicea: warrior, mother, myth", 51.
[220] Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, 75.

"popular" elements of history writing were in evidence from the very end of the seventeenth century. This means that the process of popularising Boudica, which had begun with John Fletcher and Thomas Heywood, continued almost without pause. This calls into question our views of when and how to locate the idea of "popular history".

Given that Boudica did not appear sporadically, but rather consistently as part of a constant reiteration of the national narrative, another suggestion of this chapter (and the thesis as a whole) is that the British past had an independent appeal and a long-standing integrity. Interest in the past could exist apart from the overtly ideological needs of the present. That is, the past was (and arguably is) a quotidian part of British culture: it is not reducible to scholarly historical accounts, nor was it the invention of a particular generation or elite group, nor was it an unsettled, endlessly malleable record. The growth of Boudica's popularity was not, as Jodi Mikalachki has asserted,[221] concomitant with changing societal attitudes toward women as a group, nor was it coincident with the reign of a female monarch (Queen Anne, in the case of the eighteenth century). Rather Boudica's popularity followed commercial and social forces, to use Daniel Woolf's phrase cited in the introduction, which governed the extent and nature of historical culture. Boudica's appearances in British historical culture mirrored the communication capabilities of each period – from court culture, to the urban theatre, to publications available to an increasingly literate nation– and this in turn constitutes the horizons of historical culture. Boudica's specific appearance in a given work could and sometimes did reflect a particular cultural moment or attitude, or the prejudices of an author, but historians should be cautious in making those judgments. Cultural moments are easily misinterpreted, and authorial intent can be

[221] "The history of Boadicea's reception provides an excellent example of changing English attitudes to women in power." Mikalachki, *Legacy of Boadicea*, 117.

treacherously difficult to assess. Therefore it is crucial to see each work in relation to those that came before, and each author as operating within a community whose concerns may or may not correspond with those of twentieth- and twenty-first century academics.

From the very beginning of the eighteenth century, there was a needling sense among English commentators that their history had been neglected. This was not just a lament on the lack of serious historical work on British history. In fact, a significant part of this feeling of neglect was that those historical works which did exist were unappealing to a large part of the potential audience for retellings of the past. The anonymous author of *The History of England Faithfully Extracted from Authentick Records…(*1702) stated in his preface that:

> …there are many large Volumes of English History already extant; but they are so Antique and Obsolete, that they are now scarce intelligible... Others of later dates… are so engaged in Factions, Byas'd to particular Interests, and so incoherent with themselves, and disagree with one another, that they Wilder rather Inform their Readers. Besides, they are now grown so Voluminous, Particular, and Many, that they require a good estate, to purchase them all, and without the whole, no man thinks himself a Compleat English Historian…These Inconveniences produced great Complaints, for want of such a Work as now (I hope) is in your hands, viz. An Entire English History at a Moderate Price, True in its nature, Brief in its Narration, yet Comprehensive in its Content; and which is more than all the rest, not wrote to serve a Turn, or support a particular Interest.[222]

The anonymous author here was obliged to ignore the possibility that there were histories which did attempt to appeal to wide audiences, or to be unbiased, in order to create the vacuum he intended to fill. But the sentiment is nonetheless interesting, and characteristic of the period. The anonymous history of 1702 was followed by a number of other endeavours that appealed to non-specialist readers whose incomes had not

[222] n.a, *The History of England Faithfully Extracted*... (London: Isaac Cleave, Abel Roper, A. Bosvile, and Richard Basset, 1702).

hitherto afforded them the privilege of being "a Compleat English Historian". Another editor of a complete history of England, White Kennet, wrote:

> …it is a long Complaint, that whatever be the Difficulty of compiling a General History, other Nations have master'd it better than our own, which yet all the World knows has not been unfruitful of very great Men…for 'tis not a tedious Chronicle fill'd with a World of frivolous Matter and minute Circumstances, tho' ever so true and faithful, nor a laborious Plunder of Libraries, Manuscripts, publick Roles and Records, tho' put together by many Years Application in a cold and barren Stile, that will be valu'd as a History.

Kennet clearly saw previous works as having failed to engage new audiences, or to move beyond the "tedious Chronicle". Fifty years later, Tobias Smollett was still complaining that, "By the enormous bulk and prolixity of every other English history that stands in any degree of reputation, many readers have been deterred from learning what every person ought to know, and even totally discouraged from engaging in the most entertaining and useful of all rational inquiries."[223]

Suppliers responded to this perceived demand. At the lowest estimate I can make based on my own research, there were around seventy panoramic histories of Britain or England – not including new editions – from the invasion of Julius Caesar (or occasionally earlier) to the eighteenth century published during the years 1700 to 1800.[224] Devoney Looser estimates the number of books on British history[225] published in the eighteenth century to have been about 10,000.[226] To this number must also be added the topographical works that included references to historic events, the number of

[223] T. Smollett, "Plan for the Complete History of England" in *A complete history of England deduced from the descent of Julius Caesar to the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, 1748, containing the transactions of one thousand eight hundred and three years*. (London: James Rivington and James Fletcher, 1757).
[224] I base this figure on title searches in the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* database, excluding new editions of previously published works.
[225] By this it is probably meant any books that encompassed discussions of any period, no matter how long or short, of Britain's history, eg. Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*. I limit my own research to "panoramic" histories of the entirety of British history.
[226] D. Looser, *British women writers and the writing of history, 1670-1820* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000) 10.

which is difficult to judge, and also to the growing number of local histories covering the same period in smaller areas, such as William Maitland's *History of London* (1739) and Philip Morant's *History and Antiquities of the Town and Borough of Colchester* (1748), the number of which is equally difficult to estimate and cries out for further research. Perhaps the reason that historians of history have paid so little to these panoramic histories in the context of the eighteenth century is that there were so many of them. Their potential importance to scholars of history is perhaps diminished by their very ubiquity.

As this point it is worth explicating the principles by which, more often than not, panoramic national histories were typically organised. They would be divided into sections. The first sometimes dealt with topographic or ethnographic questions regarding Britain's geography and inhabitants. Not every history would begin in this vein, but rather at the entry of Julius Caesar into Britain. This section would relate the emperor's subsequent withdrawal, and the years of relative peace which followed. This period ended when the emperor Claudius renewed Roman aggression in Britain in the 40s AD. It was Claudius who finally succeeding in quelling much of the British opposition to Roman rule, although by no means did he succeed completely. The writer would then usually relate the rebellion and capture of Caractacus, king of the Silures, in about the year 50AD. Boudica's rebellion occurred soon afterward, in 61AD, and this would often be the next episode of which a writer would take note. But the amount of detail and the extent of the discussion surrounding Boudica's story varied, and it is on these more comprehensive versions that we will focus. Later parts of the history would proceed to tell how the Romans eventually abandoned Britain, and how the Anglo-Saxons invaded and gained the upper hand over the much-harried Britons. Later parts of

these panoramic histories were usually more detailed than the sections which recapitulated the affairs of ancient Britain.

In the sections which follow, rather than focus on a few historical writers who exemplify an enlightened trajectory toward modern professionalised historiography, I aim to show that many of these new histories played on the emotional aspects of the Boudica story in a similar fashion as historical writers are said to have done in the late eighteenth century. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, it has been argued that the content of histories was shifting away from the political acts of great men and beginning to place more emphasis on the "sentimental" aspects of history by the mid- to late eighteenth century. But Boudica's story complicates this pattern. As early as the 1690s, Boudica's story was written in such a way as to appeal to the reader's emotions, in panoramic national histories as well as in drama. Thus it is arguable that sentimentalised versions of emotionally charged events were part of a popular historical culture long before the introduction of sentiment to histories by Hume and his contemporaries.

For all their emotional appeal, the political aspects of these histories should not be ignored. That political partisanship influenced history writing during the eighteenth century is not in doubt. However, like the politically-motivated work of Edmund Bolton, facts were still of essential importance to writers of history, and the broad scheme of events remained the same. This was especially important for audiences to whom the narrative of national history might still have been relatively little known. But factual accuracy was paramount for writers, and by implication for the audiences that read the histories. When divided by political opinion, we will see that historical writers levelled accusations of factual inaccuracy at their opponents. Rather than attack their

opponent's political opinions, historians levelled accusations of inaccuracy or sensationalism against those writers whose histories sought to prove the opposite position to their own. That these histories were politically biased does not in any way render them meaningless to a study of the history of history.

But there is only so much of the contemporary political discourse that a focus on Boudica can reveal. In many ways Boudica's story was apolitical: she existed long before the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans, whose constitutional arrangements were the subject of so many squabbles in the prefaces of national histories.[227] The Boudican rebellion did occasionally enter into politicised debates, usually in connection with the Druids. However, what with her justifiable rage, the sad fate of her children, and the tragedy of her defeat, Boudica's story was especially open to a pathetic rendering. Such retellings did not have to deviate very far from facts to appeal to the emotions or to the non-partisan, patriotic sentiments of its readers.

It would be impossible to discuss all of the panoramic national histories published in this period. A few examples of the more detailed or fulsome in their approach to Boudica's story will suffice to show how she could be variously portrayed in panoramic narrative histories up to the mid-century. Those histories which were more widely available than others will be of particular interest here. For example, Tobias Smollett's *History of England* (1757) demands some detailed attention both for its textual content, and because it included an original image of Boudica, a rare occurrence at this stage. The image will form the beginning of a larger section on illustrations, many of which did not appear until the later part of the eighteenth century, in Chapter Three, which covers that period.

[227] Saxonism was garnering more scholarly attention, but the Britons did not completely disappear from constitutional debates. See Kidd, *British identities*, 83-97.

This section is organised in a roughly chronological way, so I will begin with John Milton's *History of Britain*. Aside from being the first panoramic national history to discuss Boudica specifically, Milton's account of Boudica stands out because it is by far the most condemnatory, certainly of any writer before the nineteenth century, and perhaps ever. This has meant that his account has been part of the evidence used by literary scholars to implicate early modern historical writers in a campaign to condemn Boudica to oblivion. If only for this reason, it is important to include my own very different reading here in order to show that fitting Boudica exclusively into discussions of attitudes to women distorts the importance of other aspects of her story, especially attitudes to historical production, and specifically in regards to the need for evidence.

John Milton is better known for his poetry than his history, but given the breadth of his knowledge and interest, and his prodigious literary output, it would have been an odd omission if Milton had not attempted an historical work of some sort. Composed in the 1640s but published in 1670, Milton's *History of Britain* was the product of years of labour, although the first chapters, those on ancient Britain, were written in a matter of weeks. His portrayal of Boudica's story is unique among accounts up to this point because Milton rejected any previous assessment of Boudica as a British or English heroine. His retelling was vicious, politically charged, and not at all in keeping with the more sympathetic visions of Boudica portrayed in other works, many of which have been discussed here. Milton expressed contempt for what he perceived as the Britons' savagery. He believed that the Romans had imposed much-needed discipline and civility on the natives, and his dislike of female sovereigns was made clear in his discussion. He described the final battle between Boudica's Britons and Paulinus's Romans:

> ...thir [the ancient Britons'] Wives also came in Waggons to sit and behold the sport, as they made full account, of killing Romans: a folly doubtless for the serious Romans to smile at, as sure a tok'n of prospering that day: a Woeman also was thir Commander in Chief. For Boadicea and her Daughters ride about in a Chariot, telling the tall Champions as a great encouragement, that with the Britans it was usual for Woeman to be thir Leaders. A deal of other fondness they put into her mouth, not worth recital; how she was lash'd, how her Daughters were handl'd, things worthier slience, retirement, and a Vail, then for a Woeman to repeat, as don to hir own person, or to hear repeated before an host of men!

Milton went on:

> And this they do out of vanity, hoping to embellish and set out thir Historie with the strangeness of our manners, not careing in the mean while to brand us with the rankest note of Barbarism, as if in Britain Woemen were Men, and Men Woemen.[228]

Such blunt and highly gendered condemnation has not gone unnoticed by literary scholars who seek to place writings on Boudica in a discourse of negative attitudes toward women, and to Boudica in particular. Willy Maley has argued that this singularly condemnatory account was the product of Milton's misogyny and his profound distaste for the idea of female rule.[229] But the reality was more complex than Maley's assessment allows. Boudica represented almost everything Milton found distasteful in ancient Britain. That meant female power, but also, crucially, the dearth of written records. Making a distinction between the former and the latter is especially important as it once again proves the primacy of factual accuracy for historical writing, and the disregard with which historical writers could treat episodes for which they judged there to have been insufficient evidence. Even Milton's critique of the Roman writers made clear that he was suspicious of the veracity of the early histories, and that he had deigned to include a section on early Britain only because his work would have

[228] J. Milton, *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, vol. 5. F. Fogle (ed) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971) 70.
[229] Maley, "That fatal Boadicea'", 305-330.

appeared incomplete without it. Milton viewed Boudica's speech as inappropriate for repetition in the *History*, even if following the practice of previous writers would have mean that it be included. But for Milton, because it was salacious, it was in all probability a fiction and could therefore have been omitted on that basis alone. The only way Milton could condemn Boudica was to deny the facts of her story – something no writer had previously been moved to do.

In addition to what Milton thought of as its inappropriately sexual content, Dio Cassius's version of the speech was quite long and peppered with references to British liberties, Boudica's own sympathy with commoners, and her determination to defend her country to the death. As we saw in Chapter One, Annabel Patterson has argued that it was through the oration that Raphael Holinshed had been able, by making slight additions to the text, to emphasize and celebrate Boudica's patriotism. By denying Boudica her speech, Milton removed her from a discussion of what Patterson has called the "discontinuous history of ancient constitutionalism".[230] And while Boudica's role in Edmund Bolton's *Nero Caesar* (1624) was to resist tyranny in the form of Nero (even if resistance was ultimately futile in the face of God's ineluctable will) Milton instead saw her as representative of the folly of vesting authority in a single, fallible or even incompetent ruler – almost the opposite rendering to Bolton's. Monarchy was distasteful to the republican Milton, and his over-arching impression of the battle was that it resulted in the loss of British liberty by an unruly and meddling queen. By including Boudica's speech, Milton would have made her a defender of that liberty, and this was not an honour he wished to allow her. In short, Milton's distrust of women was not the whole story, although it did play some part. In his view, any understanding of

[230] Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles*, 105.

the constitution in Britain excluded women at all levels.[231] But even without the meddlesome behaviour of their womenfolk, the ancient Britons were not up to the challenge of maintaining their liberty after the withdrawal of the Romans in the fourth century. This was a point Milton made again in his "Digression" after the third book of the *History*.[232]

The *History of Britain* was a product of Milton's republicanism, written during the period when he was being patronized by the Commonwealth.[233] For many reasons, Boudica did not sit comfortably with his view of Britain's past, or his ideal vision of Britain's political future, and Milton's treatment of Boudica in the *History* reflected that. One might argue that by writing about Boudica in this way, Milton was finally attempting the project of "writing out" that Jodi Mikalachki erroneously pointed to in the work of William Camden and Raphael Holinshed. It was John Milton who suppressed Boudica's oration, proudly pointed to by Edmund Bolton and Thomas Heywood as evidence of British pluck. Writing during the Commonwealth, the republican Milton used Boudica's sex against her in order to remove her from a serious understanding of the origins of British rights and liberties. Yet even the *gravitas* of John Milton could not condemn Boudica permanently, and any writer willing to give credence to the earliest of accounts of the Roman occupation had to include a version of the Boudica story. As we will see, sympathetic renderings of her plight were far more common than Milton's condemnation.

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[231] Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles*, 220.
[232] B. Worden, "Milton: literature and life", P. Hammond and B.Worden. (eds) *John Milton: life, writing and reputation* (Oxford: The British Academy, 2010) 13.
[233] Worden, "Milton", 14. For a fuller discussion of Milton and republicanism see M. Dzelzainis, "Milton's Classical Republicanism" in D. Armitage, A. Himy, Q. Skinner.(eds), *Milton and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

John Seller's *The History of England* (first edition 1696) work also shows some singular elements in its approach to Boudica. It is the first version of the story in a panoramic national history that can arguably be termed "sentimental". Following soon after the latest stage product, Powell's *Bonduca* in 1696, it is tempting to wonder if Seller's interest in Boudica might have been piqued by the fictions that had recently appeared on stage. One could conclude that Seller was influenced by the more emotive depictions of Boudica to be found in the plays. Seller related Boudica's tale in a far more sensational fashion than previous historical writers:

> Nero … sent Suetonius his Lieutenant into Britain, where he found Prasutagus, a British Prince of great Fame, Dead, who, by his Last Will, had Bequeathed Boduo, his Queen, (by some called Bonduca)[234] and his two Daughters to the Protection of the Emperour, together with his Principality: But the Young Ladies (being very Beautiful) contrary to the Trust reposed, were Ravished by a Roman Tribune, after he had labour'd in vain to tempt their Chastity with Gifts and Flatteries. The Queen (upon knowledge of this great Injury done to her Children) exceedingly Grieved; and perceiving she was like to have no Redress, though she had complain'd of the Injury and Violation of Trust: Mov'd by her Daughters Tears and her own Courage, she resolved to Revenge the Treachery. Whereupon, calling together the chief of her People, and some of the Neighbouring Princes, she presented the Young Ladies before them, with dishelved Hair, Raining a Shower of Tears from their Sorrow-clouded Eyes…[235]

Clearly Seller took poetic licence – not reserved for poets in the arena of historical culture – in this emotional retelling of what by this time was becoming a fairly well-known story, at least among urban, English audiences. This account contrasts sharply with John Milton's version which appeared twenty years earlier. Sellers's sympathy for Boudica's daughters is clearly evident in his claim that they must have been "very beautiful", although no physical description similar to Dio's of Boudica was ever recorded. The idea that the young women had been subjected to overtures from the

[234] Even by this stage, there was still no consensus about the spelling of Boudica's name.
[235] J. Seller, *The History of England* (London: John Gwillium, 1696) 18-19.

Roman soldiers is intriguing because it would seem to bear some relation to George Powell's fictionalised version of events which would have been in circulation at the time and in which Bonduca's daughter, called Camilla in the play, was the victim of a Roman's unwanted affections. The attribution of action on the part of the daughters, who Seller says moved their mother to revenge with their tears, again shows a theatrical side to the history. These wronged, dishevelled creatures produce a "rain of tears" from their "sorrow-clouded eyes" before an audience of powerful British chiefs who, it is implied, could not but be moved by such a pathetic sight.

Seller went on to describe the battle between the Britons and their enemies:

> …so secretly was the business [of gathering the Britons for battle] managed, that the Britains Assembling by small Troops in Woods, all on a suddain, at the time prefixed, joined their Forces and fell upon the Enemy, little suspecting it, with such fury, that before they could gather their scattered Forces, Forty Thousand were Slain, and Suetonius compelled to immure himself in Troynovant or London, and send speedily for succours; so that most of the Midland Countries were recovered, and the Roman Fortresses, built to bridle the Britains with Garrisons, Demolished: But the Carcasses lying un-bury'd corrupted the Air, and brought on a Plague which made great desolation. Yet the Queen pursuing this good success, in divers skirmishes destroyed 40000 more; however, at last being betrayed for a sum of Gold, she Poisoned her self to prefer her Captivity, or being carried to Rome to grace the Victors Triumph.[236]

Here Seller seems reluctant to paint the Britons in anything less than a sympathetic light. He relates their early successes, and reminds the reader midway through the passage that the garrisons had been built by the Romans to "bridle" the oppressed Britons. Seller's conclusion here is as fanciful as his pathetic description of Boudica's sorrowful daughters. The author deviated from Dio and Tacitus and instead implies that Boudica's had in fact forced the Romans to retreat. The inclusion of a plague is also an anomaly not found in any previously published accounts. Boudica's defeat, having up to

[236] Seller, *History*, 18.

this point been consistently attributed to a failure on the part of the Britons – pride or disorganisation or some combination – is here said to be due to a betrayal. There seems to be no source for this, not even in the dramas, so Seller's assertion was of his own imagining.

It is difficult to say what motivated the author to include such, albeit not very significant, embellishments. He did not do the same for other events in ancient history, such as Caractacus's rebellion, which he described in only a few sentences. Evidently by the end of the seventeenth century, Boudica had become a character whose life and qualities were recognised as both interesting and unique, and there is little doubt that Seller must have been reading or even viewing the Boudica story in contexts outside the classical sources of Tacitus and Dio Cassius. Seller could have drawn on the very different works of John Fletcher, Edmund Bolton, Thomas Heywood, and even John Milton, the latter's distaste having done little to diminish either interest in or, in some cases, reverence for Boudica. Seller's history was reprinted twice more, with the third edition appearing in 1703. From this we can conclude that Boudica was alive and well in the historical imagination, not only providing entertainment for audiences, but also an opportunity for history writers to pen imaginative scenarios. Seller reimagined Boudica's daughters as beautiful, chaste young noblewomen, and Boudica herself as their sorrowful mother, the victim of cruel fate and false friends. But even with these changes, Seller's version largely adhered to the historicised Boudica story, the facts of which had by this point seem to have been established.

The new *Complete History of England* (1706), the editor of which, White Kennet, has been quoted above, was a response to the perennially perceived gap in the

market for a comprehensive and inexpensive history of England.[237] The increasingly popularity of panoramic national histories provided a means by which Boudica could circulate to a larger market, and writers of panoramic national histories continued to look to the Boudica story to add a bit of sensationalism and sentimentalism to their narratives. A prime example of this can be found in Bevill Higgins's *A Short View of English History* (1723). Higgins's *History* is otherwise unremarkable, conforming more or less to the narrative formula for panoramic histories described earlier in this chapter. But, like Seller's, Higgins's account of Boudica's rebellion may well have been at least partially influenced by fictional accounts he encountered elsewhere. Higgins related that:

> …Boadicea, who by the repeated Victories, she snatch'd from the Conqueror, almost extinguish'd the Roman Name in this Island; till at last by a Reverse of Fortune, being reduc'd to great Extremeity in a Seige, and one of her Daughters ravish'd, she could no longer bear the lost Honour of her House, and Slavery of Country, but by her manly Resolution with her own Hands put an End to her Glorious Life, not more like a Roman than a Briton.[238]

Here, Higgins records that only one of Boudica's daughters was raped. This statement contradicts all other histories of the event up to this point, which were either silent on the subject or mentioned that both daughters were victimised. However, in Charles Hopkins's *Boadicea*, only one daughter, Camilla, is subjected to sexual torture at the hands of the Romans. Historical writers were apt to treat the daughters as a unit because there was no extant detail about them; not even their ages were known. It was up to dramatists to invent distinct personalities for them, as Charles Hopkins had done, and to thicken their story by subjecting them to very different fates. Bevill Higgins, in a work of history, made this detail a part of his fact-based account. He also suggested that

[237] O'Brien, "History Market", 111.
[238] B. Higgins, *A short view of the English history* (London: Tho. Edlin, 1723) 10.

the daughters suffered their misfortunes after the rebellion had begun, and that their fate added to an emotional burden on the ancient queen which led to her suicide. But such details were not widely repeated and the familiar story in which both daughters fall victims to Roman cruelty, sparking the rebellion in the first place, prevailed in the long term.

Higgins's history is one example of a little-known national history produced during the first half of the eighteenth century, overlooked by historians of history because it has little to add to discussions of intellectual history or political discourse. It is clear that by the middle of the eighteenth century, Boudica's story had developed an appeal to the emotions of those who wrote and read about her, or, more accurately, that it retained the emotional appeal it had in drama and in national histories. Another example comes from William Guthrie's (1708?-1770) *General History* (1744) which, the author hoped, was a work that would "write as much to the heart as to the head." One of the aims of all the best history should be, he believed, "to give a general view of our fundamental liberties and constitutions, and to describe the great scenes of action, with the characters of its chief performers, in as warm and animating a manner as possible, without deviation from truth."[239] According to a recent biographer, Guthrie brought "considerable journalistic flair to the contemporary popularization of historiography."[240] Thus it is unsurprising that Guthrie gave a large amount of space to Boudica's story and conveyed it in an emotional way. In a somewhat breathless account, Guthrie depicts the wronged and desperate queen:

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[239] W. Guthrie, *A general history of England from the invasion of the Romans under Julius Caesar….* (London: T Waller,1744) "Preface" iii.
[240] D. Allan, "Guthrie, William (1708?–1770)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.* (Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11792, accessed 18 Oct 2012]

> As to Boadicea, she seems to have cherished life only that she might have the means of a sure and speedy vengeance... Meeting with dispositions in the Britons so answerable to her own, [Boudica] took care to keep their sentiments alive, be representing their injuries with all their aggravating circumstances, till the people were thoroughly convinced of the necessity, nay, the wisdom, of making one struggle for recovering their independency…Having assembled her army, she mounted upon a suggestum, or a throne of turf, with a lance in her hand, to give a more warlike majesty to her person, which was of the largest size; her face beautiful, but the softness of her features, tempered by a sternness and fierceness in her look…[241]

Guthrie's footnote on page 35 also suggests that Boudica may herself have been raped by the Roman soldiers, a claim not made elsewhere but which Guthrie extrapolated from Dion Cassius, whose account, we have seen, was far more sensationalistic than Tacitus's.

Another evocative example of Boudica's emotional appeal can be found in Charles Granville's *A synopsis of the troubles and miseries of England during the space of 1800 years* (1747). After an explanation of Boudica's speech to her assembled troops, Granville continued:

> The Vigour and Vivacity with which this Lady pronounced her Speech, and the warlike Majesty of her Person and Dress, inspired Fire and Fury into the Britons and drew a Shout of Applause from their whole Army. Boadicea then, lifting up her Hands to Heaven, recommended herself and her Army to its Protection; and concluded with reproaching the Romans as govern'd by an infamous Fidler, with all the Follies and Vices, but without any of the Virtues, or even the Spirit of a Woman.[242]

This account presents a curious mix of the words of Tacitus and Dio, but parts of it, such as the applause of the troops, were Granville's invention. The inclusion of the "Fidler", a reference to Emperor Nero, was a repetition of Guthrie's account, which was itself an embellished version of Dio's.

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[241] Guthrie, *General history of England*, 32-33.
[242] C. Granville, *A synopsis of the troubles and miseries of England during the space of 1800 years*. (London: R. Griffiths, 1747) 13.

The Rational Amusement (1754) was a collection of essays and letters meant to instruct and entertain its readers. Book V of the work is of particular interest here as it focused on the nature of historical writing and "the great End of History" which is to "convey experience."[243] The book took the form of an exchange of letters between "Florimund" and "Phaon". Florimund is of the opinion that "The digesting Events into an easy and natural Order, cloathing them in proper Language and enlivening them with necessary Descriptions, and well-timed Observations, is so far from prejudicing Truth, that in Reality it both clears and recommends it."[244] In the author's opinion, writers ought to turn their attention to those episodes in English history which most affected them. He implores his correspondent: "Let us know who is your heroe; let us hear why he is so; and let us be instructed from your Observations, how to estimate the Worth of our Ancestors, and to express our Value for Them, both by our Esteem and Imitation."[245] As encouragement to Phaon, Florimund includes his own example of such an affective, instructive, and edifying work, his own original (and short) *The History of Boadicea, a British Queen*. "O! Than Men would always think like this Woman, and believe that there is nothing just or unjust, beautiful or ugly, but as it stands in relation to the common Welfare of Society! No Guards could then preserve a Tyrant, or secure a successful Monster from the Hand of a true Patriot," Florimund enthused on the subject of his hero.[246] He was neither the first nor the last writer to invoke Boudica's story to enliven the passions and teach valuable lessons, in this case that the common good is

[243] n.a, *The rational amusement: comprehending a collection of letters on a great variety of subjects, serious, entertaining, moral, diverting and instructive*. (London: J. Hodges, 1754) 324.
[244] *The rational amusement*, 325.
[245] *The rational amusement*, 326.
[246] *The rational amusement*, 330.

the noblest end that men can pursue. We will return to the subject of Boudica's pathetic and didactic appeal in Chapter Four.

We turn now to Tobias Smollett's *Complete History of England* (1757) which was published shortly after David Hume's *History of England,* the first of six volumes of which had appeared in print in 1754. Tobias Smollett saw his *History* as something of a response to Hume's and to the ever-growing number of works of history which were presented to the public as unwieldy multivolume affairs. The passage of nearly six decades and the publication of dozens of works since the beginning of the century had done little to assuage the feeling amongst historical writers like Smollett that there was still a gap in the market for their works to fill. This being the case, the stated aim of Smollett's history was "to retrench the superfluities of his predecessors, and to present the Public with a succinct, candid, and complete History of our own country, which will be more easy in the purchase, more agreeable in the perusal, and less burthensome to the memory, than any work of the same nature, produced in these kingdoms."[247] Smollett took the additional step of publishing the second edition of the *Complete History* in 110 serialised six-penny numbers. His work was meant to reach a wider audience than most previous histories, and Smollett succeeded in this endeavour. Weekly sales reached 10,000 copies by 1758.[248] Smollett's political affiliation, if indeed one is evident in his *Complete History,* is not entirely clear and has been the subject of debate.[249] It is even possible to conclude that Smollett was genuinely responding to

[247] Smollett, *Plan of the Complete History of England*, 1.
[248] K. Simpson, "Smollett, Tobias George (1721–1771)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25947, accessed 20 Oct 2012]
[249] R. Fabel, "The patriotic Briton: Tobias Smollett and English politics, 1756-1771", *Eighteenth Century Studies* (1974) 100-114.

reader demand for new histories at affordable prices rather than attempting to promote a political agenda.

From the point of view of Boudica's appearances in historical culture, Smollett's account of the Boudica story shows the mark of a novelist, as William Guthrie's had that of a journalist. Of the ancient Britons, Smollett wrote: "Nay, their miseries became the subject of ridicule to their oppressors, who insulted them on all occasions, so as to kindle a desperate spirit of resentment in a people naturally addicted to passion and revenge. Their minds being thus prepared, nothing was wanting but some remarkable outrage, to blow the embers into a dangerous flame of open rebellion…"[250] This outrage came in the form of the cruelty shown toward Boudica and her daughters by the Roman troops. "These shocking barbarities, added to the other motives of discontent, exaggerated by the dowager, who was a woman of masculine spirit and irresistible eloquence, and inflamed by the remaining Druids, who had such influence over all the island, produced an universal revolt."[251] Smollett's version follows that of Thomas Carte, discussed below, in that his also accounts for the general insurrection by citing the unity with which the British tribes defended the Druidic religion. Like Carte, Smollett also claimed that following their final defeat, the Britons had intended to rally once again, but that the sudden death of Boudica, "occasioned by the violence of her grief and despair, procured, as some alledge, by poison,"[252] dashed all their hopes.

What is clear from the histories discussed above is that Boudica's story had inherent emotional appeal, and that historical writers were not remiss in recognising and exploiting its pathos for an audience of non-specialists. Indeed, as William Guthrie

[250] Smollett, *Complete history of England*, 33.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Smollett, *Complete history of England*, 34.

attested in his preface, it was part of the historian's duty to entertain his readers while not deviating – too egregiously – from truth. I would conclude from this that the elements which Mark Phillips has linked to biography and other "genres of historical writing" which were gaining in popularity in the late eighteenth century, were in fact part of an accessible historical culture from a very early period.

Works which attempted to engage the reader on an emotional level while remaining loyal to the facts of the national narrative became popular reading in the eighteenth century. But partiality was not, it would seem, a barrier to success. Partisan histories were also among the best-selling histories of the time. As mentioned above, the partisan nature of history writing has garnered the attention of scholars since J.G.A. Pocock pointed out the divide between the Whig supporters of an Anglo-Saxon constitution and the Tory view that the English constitution was formed as a consequence of the Norman Conquest. This controversy understandably led to the production of more works of history, as the past became a means of proving rights and duties in the present. Karen O'Brien argues that the connection between "classicism, patriotism and the appreciation of English liberties" had become "the standard rationale" for the production of national histories by the early decades of the eighteenth century.[253] But this "appreciation of English liberties" could take more than one form, as the constitutional debate showed.

In determining how Boudica fitted into partisan discourses recoverable in the histories, we must understand how eighteenth-century writers dealt with the period in which she lived. Disagreements between historical writers of different political opinions centred not on Boudica herself, but rather on the role of the ancient Britons, particularly

[253] O'Brien, "History market", 112.

the Druids, in the formation of the constitution. Some writers chose to ignore the pre-Anglo-Saxon past in their histories. For example, in 1712, the author of *A Compendious History of the Monarchs of England from King William I* provided this disclaimer: "If any object against this History, because it omits the Times of the Romans, Saxons and Danes, I answer, that many fabulous Accounts, that we have of those Times, and the little that is material in 'em, is sufficient Excuse besides that the Smallness of the Volume would not afford sufficient Room to say much; and it is better to say nothing at all than nothing to the Purpose."[254] As we have seen, John Milton, whose ancient history of Britain was to be republished in multiple editions of the White Kennet's *General History* (1706) admitted to including the earlier part of British history only for reasons of thoroughness. David Hume had similar misgivings in his history, which began to appear in 1754. The last volume, which was the first in the chronological sequence, appeared in the 1760s. "The curiosity entertained by all civilized nations, of enquiring into the exploits and adventures of their ancestors, commonly excites a regret that the history of remote ages should always be so much involved in obscurity, uncertainty, and contradiction."[255] His recitation of the Boudica story gave only the barest facts, noting that Boudica had been Queen of the Iceni, that she had been treated in "the most ignominious manner" by the Romans, and that she took poison rather than be captured alive by the conquering army.[256] As had been the case with John Milton, Boudica's non-appearance, or the manner of her appearance, in histories was not solely

[254] G.L, *A compendious history of the monarchs of England from King William I* (London: C. Brown, 1712)
[255] D. Hume, *History of England, from the invasion of Julius Caesar to the revolution in 1688*, Six volumes. (London: A. Millar, 1762) Vol 6, p. 1.
[256] Hume, *History of England*, 6.

a matter of political persuasion. It had as much to do with fidelity to trustworthy evidence.

For other writers, ancient Britain could be drawn into the debate over the origins of the constitution, and Boudica played at least some role in this, if only as an emotionally charged character. For an example of this we turn now to the most successful narrative history of the first half of the eighteenth century, Paul de Rapin Thoyras's *History of England* (1725). Rapin (1661-1725) was a Huguenot refugee and soldier who landed with William of Orange at Torbay.[257] By 1705, Rapin had begun to think seriously on the idea of writing a history of England intended for a European audience. But his vision of history, like that of many other writers, was bound to his understanding of the current English party system and methods of government. Prior to writing his history, Rapin published his *Dissertation sur les whigs et les tories* (1717) as an explanation of the British party system for a continental audience, but it says much about his vision of British history. Tellingly, it began with the Anglo-Saxon parliaments, or Wittena-Gemot, and moved swiftly to the dispossession of the English under William the Conqueror. In that treatise, Rapin entered the debate about the origins of the constitution, an endeavour that he continued in his *History of England* a few years later. In the history, Rapin took a firmly Whiggish view; his was to be "the first systematic 'Whig interpretation'" of English history.[258] Rapin's *History of England* up to 1649 was finished by 1723, when it was published in the Hague. Nicholas Tindal provided the English translation in 1725. Rapin's vision of the English party system, in

[257] H. Trevor-Roper, "A Huguenot historian: Paul Rapin" in I. Scouloudi (ed), *Huguenots in Britain and their French background, 1550-1800* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1987) 3-19.
[258] Trevor-Roper, "Huguenot historian", 5.

addition to the Protestant resistance to Catholicism, were formative parts of his historical understanding.[259]

What, then, of Rapin's treatment of Boudica in his *History*? Like many works less successful than his, Rapin's recitation of the story is straightforward, though with some deviations. He was a thorough writer, and used the accounts of both Tacitus and Dion for his version. The only out-of-place detail is a mysterious mention of Venutius, a neighbouring prince not usually associated with Boudica's rebellion.[260] Venutius is mentioned only once in Rapin's text, prompting the addition of a footnote by Tindal in the 1725 version, "What had become of Venutius?".[261] Rapin's only comment on the cause of the rebellion – Roman cruelty – is to say that, "The Roman Historians themselves agree that the violent Proceedings of the Emperor's Officers gave the Britons but too just Cause to revolt." Here Rapin used the opinions of the Roman historians, who he assumed to have been sympathetic to their countrymen, to show that Boudica's cause was just. His version also has some flavour of the "sentimental" history when he describes Boudica as "burning with a Desire of Revenge", and when he purports that, to the Britons, Boudica's "noble Stature, and Heroic Courage made them hope she had all the Qualities of a General".[262] After her defeat, she was "touch'd with so deep a Sense of Shame and Loss, that she ended her Days with Poison."[263]

In spite of, or perhaps because of its success, Rapin's *History* invited controversy amongst his contemporaries. In 1732, the travel writer Thomas Salmon

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[259] M. G. Sullivan, "Rapin de Thoyras , Paul de (1661–1725)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23145, accessed 21 Nov 2012]
[260] Venutius was the husband of Cartismandua, Queen of the Brigantes; she was sometimes confused with Boudica.
[261] P. de Rapin de Thoyras, *The History of England from the invasion of the Romans to the end of the reign of William the Conqueror*, Translated by N. Tindal. (London: James and John Knapton, 1725) 54.
[262] Rapin, *History*, 54.
[263] Rapin, *History*, 55.

published his own *Modern History, or the Present State of All Nations*, which included a lengthy diatribe impugning Rapin's supposed impartiality. In Salmon's view, Rapin was nothing more than a foreign menace whose false history was a misleading attempt to expose the innate Republicanism and Presbyterianism of the British past – in short, Rapin's history was quite simply a slander on Salmon's own nation's history. In addition, Rapin's "partiality to the Republican faction" was all too obvious. But rather than focus on this, Salmon went straight to the facts, and, interestingly, to the sentimentalised elements of Rapin's work. Worse than his obvious bias, said Salmon, was that Rapin's editors, "have dress'd up the Story in such a pleasing Form, that young People read it as greedily as they would a Novel or a Play, not considering the Tendency of it… here we find Poetry and Fiction intermix'd with our History."[264] Salmon's objection to Rapin and his direct reference to novels and plays suggests that the "sentimental" approach to history writing was gaining ground, but that it was not a welcome development for everyone. For Salmon, the inclusion of anecdotal or biographical elements – with their appeal to the sentiments of readers – to historical writing was no better than the inclusion of falsehoods. It was, he thought, a ploy to gain the attention of credulous audiences who were attracted to novels and plays, and who would not take sufficient caution in regards to reading history. Dangerous ideas were all the more pernicious in a seemingly innocuous, even attractive, packaging which appealed to the credulous and the sentimental.

As for Salmon's own version of the Boudica story, he was critical of the inventions evident in other histories, such as Boudica's speech to her troops, which Rapin had quoted in full. Salmon also took issue with what he saw as a tendency to

[264] T. Salmon, *Modern History or the present state of all nations*, Vol. XVI (London: Tho. Wotton, 1732) xii.

relate Boudica's defeat as a great victory for the Romans. For Salmon, the British cause was the more just one: "The people might be moved with the Wrongs themselves and their Queen had suffered; and (according to the Accounts of their Enemies) had abundance of Justice on their side; but Justice is often too weak a Defence against regular Forces, which usually gain their Point, let their Cause be never so bad."[265] Aside from this, Salmon's account would appear to be the more thorough of the two. For example, he mentioned the part played by Seneca in the wrongs done to the Britons, a detail which by this stage was only rarely recorded. But he also rejected Boudica's speech as an invention, declining to include it.

As Rapin had it, the Romans' behaviour toward the beleaguered Britons "bred in the Minds of the People so utter an Aversion to a Foreign Yoke, that they were all at once inspir'd with a Resolution to shake it off" and so they "join'd themselves to the rest of their Countrymen, for the Recovery of their Liberty."[266] Rapin's emphasis on the recovery of liberty was bolstered by Boudica's speech to her troops, which he included in a paraphrased version. Rapin summarised her words: "She came not there, as one descended from Royal Progenitors, to fight for Empire or Riches, but as one of the common People, to revenge the Loss of their Liberty…"[267] Salmon's objection to the speech was on the grounds that it was almost certainly a fiction, but this also freed him from having to relate words that might seem repugnant to a writer (or reader) with royalist leanings. In this way, his objection was not unlike John Milton's, who had refused to repeat Boudica's words because he was not inclined to believe in the veracity of the ancient sources, and because, in his opinion, such words should never have been

[265] Salmon, *Modern History*, 61.
[266] Rapin, *History*, 51.
[267] Rapin, *History*, 53.

uttered by a woman in public. In addition, the sentiments of the speech itself were in opposition to his view of right government – even if his view of right government was not the same as Salmon's. But both Milton and Salmon explicitly stated that they omitted the speech for reasons of accuracy. Arguably, these two historical writers were more motivated by political persuasion than by fidelity to an ideal of history writing, much more than, for example, Edmund Bolton had been. But the perceived necessity of legitimising the omission by pleading for the objectionable veracity of the material, or the questionable nature of certain historical information, would suggest that even the most politically-motivated historical writers were forced to adhere to the precepts of historical enquiry, and address some notion of historical truth, even if this was only lip service. Thus the exposure of political discourse in historical writing in the eighteenth century, a task undertaken by Laird Okie, is by no means the end of the story: the historical method of these works is also worth interrogating, both against the background of the avowed partisanship of the period, as well as in light of the growing history market.

Despite their political differences, both Rapin and Salmon adhered to the view that Boudica's rebellion was one of the last attempts by the Britons to wrest their liberty from the Romans, an endeavour that, while admirable, would ultimately result in the supremacy of Roman ideals amongst the conquered Britons. Despite her failure, Boudica's patriotism was appealing both to Whigs and Tories, as well as to the unaffiliated. Boudica could represent something more primordial, even "natural", to the British nation, than the heated debates over Anglo-Saxon or Norman inheritance. As John Holmes put it in his *History of England: being a compendium adapted to the capacities and memories of youth at school* (1737), after briefly relating the Boudica

narrative: "There seems to be something in our Climate that inspires with a more than ordinary Love of Liberty; for which never fore did men behave braver than these poor unciviliz'd Britons…"[268] Such statements had the effect of distancing the actions of the ancients from any present political implications, and appealed instead to a perceived innate love of freedom from foreign domination.

One point of contention unique to discussions of ancient British history was the place of the Druids in debates about the constitution. Historical writers often saw the ancient Britons as being under the control of the enigmatic Druids, and the ancient writers Tacitus and Dio both presented evidence of Boudica's involvement with them. Tacitus's account suggested that Boudica's rebellion was caused in part by the destruction of the sacred Druid groves on Mona, and by Suetonius's brutal massacre of the priests and priestesses on the island. In his characteristically overblown fashion, Dio's account has Boudica praying to the goddess Andraste. It is for this reason that we occasionally find Boudica and the Druids discussed very closely in the histories. However, the role of the ancient Druids was part of eighteenth-century constitutional debates, independent of the Boudica story. The writer Thomas Carte took issue with Rapin's focus on the Anglo-Saxons, and, in his "Defence of English History" (1734), Carte argued that the Druids were legitimate governors highly esteemed by their people.[269] They ruled by consent as well as by right, and Carte believed this to be as firm a constitution as any esteemed by Rapin. Thomas Carte wrote his own *History of England* (1747) and used the opportunity to provide a more thorough account of the Druids, devoting page after page to their learning, their intercourse with other Druid

[268] J. Holmes, *The History of England: being a compendium adapted to the capacities and memories of youth at school* (London: A. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, 1737) 11.
[269] T. Carte, *A Defence of English History against the Misrepresentations of M. de Rapin Thoyras, in his History of England, now publishing weekly*. (London: J. Wilford, 1734) 4-6.

communities outside Britain, and their religious and social practices.[270] As for Boudica's rebellion, Carte was one of the first writers since Tacitus to attribute the rebellion, at least in part, to national anger at the destruction of the sacred groves and the defenceless Druid community on Mona, or Anglesey, in addition to the proximate wrongs done to Boudica and her family.[271] But it was the threat to the Britons' common religion which, according to Carte, provoked rival tribes to unite against the Romans.

Boudica played an important role in this united front. Carte described her as, "a woman of venerable aspect, graceful person, high spirit, masculine courage, and warlike disposition."[272] Carte related the story of the battle between Britons and Romans until the British were defeated near London. However, his account deviated from the usual ones when he stated that the Britons, although they were beaten, were mustering for another attack "when the sudden death of Bonduica, caused probably by grief, vexation, and despair, or hastened (as some say) by poison, disconcerted all their measures, and caused them to disperse into their several countries, an usual consequence of disappointments, in armies collected out of several nations."[273] In his version of Britain's early history, Carte attempted to show that the Druids were as much a part of Britain's constitutional heritage as the Anglo-Saxon parliaments, and that the condition of the people in ancient Britain was not as low and barbaric as the Roman historians implied. Instead he told a more sympathetic story of a civilization, albeit an alien one, lost to Roman luxury. Like Salmon and Rapin, Carte suggested that Boudica led the Britons in their final, futile attempt to recover their liberties. This was an act which secured her a venerable position in written histories regardless of the political ends of

[270] T. Carte, *A General History of England, Volume I* (London: J. Hodges, 1747).
[271] Carte, *General History*, 116.
[272] Ibid.
[273] Carte, *General History*, 118.

their authors. Like Rapin and Salmon, Carte portrayed Boudica as the last bulwark of British independence. But he also used the ancient Britons to argue against Rapin's whiggish reliance on an Anglo-Saxon constitutional argument. Carte's history did not attain the same status as Rapin's, but his sympathetic portrayal of the Druids was echoed in other histories.[274]

However, these appeals to history for party political reasons should not cause us to overlook the substantive point. Frequent references in prefaces and prologues point to there having been a demand for works that detailed the factual, historicised basis of the national narrative in an entertaining, engaging way. Even if the authors of large-scale histories saw themselves responding to criticisms from the opposite end of the political spectrum rather than to public demand for histories, their works contributed as much to the circulation of an idea of national history as they did to partisan debates. Rapin's 15-volume *History of England* (1725-1731) in English ran to five editions in thirty years.[275] It was to become England's most successful book serialization up to that time, and a defining moment for the book industry.[276] Rapin's history was widely viewed as the only "impartial" history of England, showing that perhaps the political implications of Rapin's arguments were lost on at least some readers.[277] Indeed, even the size of such works did not have too great an impact on sales, as later historians in England were able to rely on audiences accustomed to buying works in multiple volumes.[278]

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[274]For example, *Mother Bunch. The British remembrancer: containing, a new history of England, ecclesiastical and civil, From the happy state of the primitive Britons to the present time*…(London: C. Pugh, 1756). Edmund Burke also repeated Carte's view in his "Essay towards an abridgement of the English History", which was not published during his lifetime.
[275] Trevor-Roper, "Huguenot historian", 14.
[276] Hicks, *Neoclassical history*, 147.
[277] Trevor-Roper, "Huguenot historian", 14.
[278] O'Brien, "History market", 124

Part III. Conclusion

One main point to emerge from this discussion and that in the previous chapter is the idea that, in the context of historical culture at least, fact and fiction were not in binary opposition to one another. Embellishing the facts was a technique employed in historical writing – regardless of its politicised content – in a highly effective, and affective, way. This was done much earlier than previous studies have suggested. I would argue that the "sentimental" focus of historical writing in the late eighteenth century was not a product of the shift away from high politics to a more "philosophical" and inward-looking approach occasioned by new Enlightenment modes of historiography, but rather the latest iteration of an abiding characteristic of historical works produced for non-specialist audiences, examples of which can be found as early as the seventeenth century in the case of Boudica. This is an argument that the rest of this thesis seeks to elaborate: that much of what we see as being part of a relatively new "popular" culture of history in the late eighteenth century is in fact characteristic of an enduring historical culture in Britain that can be traced further back.

This chapter has shown that following the rediscovery of Boudica in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, her story gained some level of fame through the decades following the publication of Thomas Heywood's *Exemplary Lives* and the mid-eighteenth century. The growing number of published histories, motivated by the partisanship of historians as much as the demand for "impartial" histories by readers, dictated that Boudica would have entered into a larger field of vision than she ever had before regardless of popular attitudes to women, or queens, or ancient Britain, simply

because she was a part of the narrative being recapitulated in the histories. In addition, the two new plays produced at the very end of the seventeenth century suggest that Boudica remained popular outside the context of narrative history. As we will see, her image was chosen to adorn the frontispiece of Smollett's best-selling *Complete History* without any caption to explain who the woman pictured was. This is itself a testimony to Boudica's recognised status, in addition to contributing to the maintenance of that status, in the nation's narrative.

The partisan histories show that even the most politically-motivated authors could not control how their works were viewed by a popular audience, the members of which may have missed the more subtle implications of the works. What was in demand was not a particular narrative of British history, but any narrative at all. This was part of Boudica's appeal: she was a significant character in a depoliticised, yet patriotic view of national history – one to be more celebrated than debated. In fact, the controversy came from the more emotive aspect of her story, which playwrights used to explore her behaviour and motivations, and which historical writers could be accused of sensationalising for their own gain. Plays were also useful in adding detail to what remained a scant factual record. The playwrights Powell and Hopkins fleshed out the characters of Boudica's daughters, gave them names and love interests, and historians occasionally followed suit with their sentimentalised narratives. The result of this was that by 1760, Boudica played two simultaneous roles. First, she was becoming an individual with pathetic appeal, and thus the subject of both sentimental histories and popular plays. Second, she was part of a national narrative that was becoming well-known to popular audiences through the growing number of panoramic histories. Her role in this narrative was usually that of a pre-constitutional fighter for English (used

interchangeably with British) liberty. She was vividly imagined as patriotic, an admirable trait which could be embellished and admired, even if it was complicated by the fact of her ultimate defeat. In the next chapter, we will see how Boudica presented an example of a Bolingbrokean "patriot queen" above party faction. We will also explore how historical culture manifested in the later half of the eighteenth century. Boudica's particular brand of patriotism brought her into an even more multimedia historical culture that grew up during the later part of the century.

Chapter Three

"Britons Strike Home": Boudica and patriotism, c. 1750-1800

The period covered in this chapter, the late eighteenth century, is the period during which Boudica's story and image were being circulated in new ways. This increasing sense of who she was and what she had done meant that Boudica could do cultural work beyond that which was possible for her in the seventeenth century. She became a patriotic symbol, as well as a multi-dimensional character whose story and image could be used as a vehicle for expounding patriotism sentiment. This chapter will argue that Boudica's story was an ideal one for exploring the pitfalls and advantages of remaining loyal to a faltering monarch, or declaring open opposition to one in order to promote the cause of freedom. Such explorations of her patriotism were only possible because she was consistently viewed as an authentic historical character. Arguably, people had accepted Boudica as a factual part of the British narrative, and any embellishment of that fact was likely to have been recognised as such. Thus it would be unwise to consider any work about Boudica to have been a condemnation, or an impartial historical assessment, unless the author of the work made such a message and motive explicit.

I argue that a large part of Boudica's patriotic image evolved as a result of the combination of fact and embellishment found in panoramic national histories like those discussed in the previous chapter. It is possible that the perception of her story as factual, or based on historically documented events, gave later fictional retellings more emotional power; this authenticity also made her story relevant to contemporary discussions of patriotism and national identity. This in turn sparked more debate about

the relationship between drama and history, especially as a reaction to Richard Glover's *Boadicia; queen of Britain* (1753). We can see these works as the precursor to Boudica's later portrayals in biography and fiction aimed at a female audience especially. These will be discussed in Chapter Four.

In arguing that Boudica's popular patriotic presentation was increasingly important in this period, I do not mean to support an idea of Boudica as a mere cipher for spreading patriotic ideas; that is, as a malleable invented tradition, forged to maintain a fiction.[279] If eighteenth-century audiences had no idea that Boudica had resisted the cruel Roman invaders, she would have meant nothing to that audience when they felt themselves threatened by enemies from abroad. Thus I predicate the following discussion on the idea that Boudica's story had to have been established and circulated in order for her to have any significance at all. This is where historical culture beyond the history of the discipline becomes relevant, even necessary. The fact that Boudica was seen as a patriotic figure merely demonstrates the extent to which she was established as a fact and a fixture of British historical culture by this time. Put differently, the need for a patriotic symbol in the eighteenth century did not pre-exist Boudica, and she was not "rediscovered" in order to fill the needs of the eighteenth century. Rather, the idea of her was there before, and her patriotism – or at least her willingness to die for the freedom of her people – was a widely acknowledged "fact" established by classical sources and repeated by historical writers since Tacitus. Her story, "useful" as it may have been, was not invented at any one moment or by a single body of inventors, to paraphrase John Pocock. To argue that the past has its own existence and an appeal in its own right is not to say that elements of the past cannot be

[279] Hobsbawm and Ranger, *Invention of Tradition*.

or have not been employed as idioms for understanding the present. But to argue that the past is or ever was a mere epiphenomenon to the present, as Hobsbawm, Ranger and others have done, is to overstate the case.

Following on from the last chapter's discussion of the burgeoning number of national histories, the present chapter has two complementary aims. The first, as I have touched on, is to explore how Boudica took on a patriotic aspect in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and to understand the nature and implications of that patriotism. The second aim of this chapter is to move beyond a discussion of theatrical and written works to show the ways in which Boudica appeared in different arenas of eighteenth-century historical culture, as well as the ways in which her patriotic identity entered into contemporary political discourse in the form of the popular song "Britons Strike Home", which had its origins in George Powell's *Bonduca* (1696). The song became a popular sensation and could be heard as far afield as Dublin. It rang out throughout the eighteenth century, and continued to do so well into the nineteenth century. The simple slogan "Britons Strike Home" also took on a life of its own. That this was a product of a single play about a 2000-year-old warrior queen has not been explored before. This discussion of Boudica's impact on popular song will be followed by discussion of some of the images in which Boudica had begun to appear with far more frequency than she ever had before. Images and song are two ways in which Boudica entered into British historical culture in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and consequently, these elements of historical culture fed into a view of Boudica as a patriotic character.

Part I. Boudica and patriotism

Boudica's very ubiquity in the eighteenth century makes her especially interesting for a discussion of historical culture and national consciousness. Boudica's patriotic identity in this period was twofold. First, she was identified with a sense of resistance to invasion, or the defence of Britain's inborn constitutional liberty against outsiders. We have seen that as early as the sixteenth-century *Chronicles* by Holinshed, Boudica's myth was enlivened by its potential to be associated with the ancient liberties of the Britons and subsequent generations of inhabitants of the island. As Edward Gibbon put it in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*:

> The various tribes of Britons possessed valour without conduct, and the love of freedom without the spirit of union. They took up arms with savage fierceness, they laid them down, or turned them against each other, with wild inconstancy; and while they fought singly, they were successively subdued. Neither the fortitude of Caractacus, nor the despair of Boadicea, nor the fanaticism of the Druids, could avert the slavery of their country, or resist the steady progress of the Imperial generals…[280]

This raw, visceral insistence on independence, no matter how unsophisticated in form, from a foreign power was a stance which all political persuasions could agree was admirable. Boudica's place in this fight presented a notion of liberty capacious enough to allow her to be venerated by any political party, or even religious denomination. As "Florimund" put it in *The Rational Amusement*:

> The intention of restoring freedom to her country, groaning under the load of a foreign Usurpation, ought to consecrate her Memory to all Posterity, and make her consider's as a saint and martyr, by all free Britons of every Church…let eternal Honours wait on the Protectoress of British Freedom; and let this devout Reverence teach us, that the most cruel Death is preferable in the Cause of Liberty, to the best Life that can be led without it.[281]

[280] E. Gibbon, *The history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire*. A. Lentin and B. Norman (eds) (London: Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 1998) 4.
[281] *The rational amusement*, 342.

This brings us to the second aspect of Boudica's patriotism in the eighteenth century. While certainly drawn upon in times of war, especially toward the end of the eighteenth century, Boudica as a patriotic symbol represented much more than just an expression of resistance to invasion. In the previous chapter, we touched on the ways in which Boudica might be thought apolitical because she was a heroine of the ancient British past, a period without some of the more divisive connotations of the Anglo-Saxon or Norman periods. Hers was a thoroughly "British" identity because she was an ancient Briton, a group which had never lost that appellation even after the subsequent incursions of Romans, Saxons, and Normans. That it was from this most ancient group that modern Britons inherited their name became a significant part of Boudica's story, especially as Welsh notions of cultural nationhood grew (this will be discussed in Chapter Five). I would argue that it was a shared historical identity based around a very long, authentic narrative of invasion, resistance, and even revolution, which could be pointed to in order to instil and explain a sense of British identity, and thus it is no coincidence that "Britons" came to be the most common way of referring to all the inhabitants of the British Isles. That Boudica held the title of "Briton" from the beginning of her fame would seem to have added to her potential for patriotic veneration.

I argue that for some contemporaries, Boudica fitted with the interpretation of patriotism explained by Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751), in *The Idea of a Patriot King* as well as in other works, notably his *Remarks on the history of England* and *Letters on the Study and Use of History*.[282] In Bolingbroke's view, the

[282] *The works of the Right Honourable Henry St John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke*, Five volumes. D. Mallet (ed) (London: 1777). As an aside, this presents an intriguing coincidence given our focus on Boudica: Bolingbroke developed his view while in exile, just as the expelled Roman philosopher Seneca,

best means of defending Britain's constitutional liberties from enemies within and out with was to avoid the formation of factions.[283] Government by faction, or party, was, in Bolingbroke's mind, "in opposition to the sense and interest of the nation".[284] It presented the greatest danger to national liberty and must, he argued, be avoided. Bolingbroke's patriotic ideal was highly important in the political discourse of the period, and his views appeared to have influenced the way in which Boudica was presented by the playwright Richard Glover in his 1753 play *Boadicia; Queen of Britain*. Arguably, Glover saw Boudica's story as a means of exploring Bolingbroke's ideas of patriotism, factionalism, and liberty. While Boudica could be seen as a defending against foreign incursion, she also provided a means by which the patriot Glover could explore the danger of factionalism within the confines of the British national past.

This is an interpretation of the play which scholars of literature have not recognised, and which is not immediately clear from reading the play. Literature scholars have been overwhelmingly concerned with ascertaining the point at which Boudica became a "national heroine" in this period. Speaking of the stage plays in

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discussed in Chapter One, had taken solace in exile in his own Stoic philosophy before he was forced by Emperor Nero to take his own life. Both Seneca and Bolingbroke used their exile and the internalized intellectual life as a source of consolation for the loss of their public voice. It was Seneca who many say was partially responsible for Boudica's rebellion against the Romans, yet it was also Seneca's "constancy" which influenced the idea of patriotism into which Boudica would come to be fitted during the late eighteenth century.

[283] For use of the word "faction" by Bolingbroke and his contemporaries, and disputes about its exact meaning, see P. Rogers, "Swift and Bolingbroke on faction," *Journal of British Studies*. 9:2. (1970) pp. 71-101. Rogers interprets Bolingbroke as "an extreme, contrived phenomenon…Rule by faction is promoted by the ambitious designs of particular individuals, bent on private gain…" p. 80. See also Q. Skinner, "The principles and practice of opposition: the case of Bolingbroke versus Walpole", in N. McKendrick (ed), *Historical perceptions: studies in English thought and society in honour of J.H. Plumb* (London: Europa Publications, 1974). 93-128. pp 99-100; D. Armitage, "A Patriot for Whom?: The afterlives of Bolingbroke's Patriot King", *Journal of British Studies* (1997) 397-418.; B. Cottret (ed.) *Bolingbroke's political writings: the conservative Enlightenment* (Houndsmill: Macmillan Press, Ltd. 1997).

[284] Bolingbroke, "Remarks on the history of England," *Works*, Vol. 1, 384.

which Boudica appeared, two of which were discussed in the previous chapter (there were four in total before 1800: the other two will be discussed below), one scholar suggested that, "Warrior women such as Boadicea remind audiences about the supposed need for men to take charge of political affairs and foreign populations... Onstage before 1800, dramatists appear unable to paint her sympathetically, because to do so seems to condone her stunning defeat, or at least the savage mistakes of undomesticated and uncivil women."[285] This opinion contains echoes of Mikalachki's and Frenèe-Hutchins's arguments discussed in the first chapter. Such arguments have been predicated on the belief that Boudica's femininity was always problematic, and that any other possible interpretations of Boudica's actions, or any motivations for heroising or ignoring or condemning her evident in the eighteenth century, must have been secondary concerns to what recent scholarship has declared to be Boudica's obstructive womanhood.

The next section of this chapter will focus on Glover's play and the contemporary commentary that grew up around it, some of which touched on themes that will be familiar from previous chapters. The interplay between fact and fiction continued to be part of the discussion, and Glover was criticised for having deviated in some places from Boudica's established narrative. He was also criticised for not adhering to the accepted modes of tragic design, which the author argued was a conscious assertion of his own patriotic liberty. In art, as in life, the Briton maintained his freedom, Glover argued. Aside from placing the play in its appropriate political and historical context, this discussion of Glover's play and the ways in which literature scholars have interpreted it will show that by taking a view of history that ventures

[285] Nielsen, "Boadicea onstage", 607.

outside the history of the discipline (or its acknowledged predecessor, Enlightenment historigraphy), we can begin to see some of the ways in which people and events based in "documented" history have come to be understood by a wider public.

Part II. Patriotism, historical fact, and human nature: Richard Glover's *Boadicia* (1753)

Throughout the entirety of the period under discussion in this thesis, the theatre and published plays had a vital role in maintaining Boudica's presence in British historical culture. This continued to be the case in the latter half of the eighteenth century. But in keeping with the increased tendency to associate Boudica with patriotic resistance, the next play written about Boudica was an exploration of her own role in the dangers of factionalism that occupied many other writers at the time.[286] Richard Glover (1712-1785) was a member of the "patriot opposition" to Prime Minister Robert Walpole, and was later considered as one possible author of the much debated *Letters of Junius*, although there is little evidence to support this theory.[287] Glover was a prominent and outspoken member of mid-eighteenth-century London political and cultural society and a well-known author before his production of *Boadicia* in 1753. He sat in Parliament for seven years, his interest in political affairs being always on behalf of the merchant class of which he was an enthusiastic member.[288] Glover was said to be "a patriot of the most

[286] C. Gerrard, *The patriot opposition to Walpole: politics, poetry, and national myth, 1725-1742* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994). See also B. Dobree, "The theme of patriotism in the poetry of the early eighteenth century", *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1949) 49-65.
[287] Glover's "memoirs" were published under the title *Memoirs of a celebrated literary and political character, from the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole* (London: 1813). The editor of the memoirs, Richard Duppa, believed Glover was the author of the *Letters of Junius*, and he published a second volume, *An inquiry concerning the author of the Letters of Junius with reference to the memoirs by a celebrated literary and political character* (London: 1815) in an attempt to prove it. The author of the *Letters* remains uncertain.
[288] P. Baines, "Glover, Richard" ODNB <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10831?docPos=1>

independent cast, and scorning to bind himself about any one political party, was by all alike neglected".[289] But he had allied himself early on with the "patriot" Whigs, and his best known work, *Leonidas* (1737), published in an epic nine volumes, extolled public spiritedness over party factionalism.[290] *Leonidas* propelled Glover to the status of "literary darling" of the Whig opposition.[291] The work was an unabashed tribute to Frederick, Prince of Wales, who had served as the inspiration for the eponymous hero, and it was said that the Prince was Glover's patron, as he was to other "patriot" Whig poets.[292] Like Bolingbroke and others of that circle, Glover saw Frederick as the great white hope for patriotic kingship.

Glover soon struck up a friendship with the most famous thespian of the day, David Garrick, in about 1741, and it was at Garrick's Theatre-Royal Drury Lane that Glover's *Boadicia* was first acted. Richard Glover's *Boadicia* was performed for the first time in December 1753, although there is evidence to suggest that he was writing it as early as 1742.[293] The play was performed ten times throughout the month of December 1753. Traditionally, the third, sixth, and ninth nights of a new play were staged as benefit nights for the author, and a ten-performance run was standard for a new production.[294] One of Glover's benefit nights, 12 December 1753, was the same date on which the play was published.[295]Another edition was published in February

[289] *Bell's British Theatre; consisting of the most esteemed English plays*. Vol. II. (London: 1797)
[290] Baines, "Glover, Richard," ODNB.
[291] Gerrard, *Patriot opposition*, 80.
[292] Gerrard, *Patriot opposition*, 63.
[293] David Garrick to Peter Garrick. 19 April 1742, *The letters of David Garrick*, D. M. Little and G. M. Kahrl, P. DeK. Wilson (eds) (London: Oxford University Press, 1963). Garrick refers to Glover as being in the process of writing a new play about Boudica's life.
[294] G. W. Stone, *TLS*, 1747-1776, Part 4, Vol. I, (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960) cii.
[295] Stone, *TLS*, 394-397.

1754.[296] A later edition, which bore a frontispiece illustration of Boudica in classical garb with a crown upon her head, appeared in 1791.[297]

Glover's work was entirely original and explored the folly of his Boudica character's (called Boadicia) actions prior to her defeat. In summary, Glover portrayed the British defeat as being the unhappy but inevitable consequence of a disagreement and subsequent break between Boadicia and her brother-in-law and general, Dumnorix. The play's Boadicia is hell-bent on taking revenge at whatever cost against the Romans, who had raped her daughters and scourged her, while Dumnorix spends much of the play trying to cajole the enraged Boadicia away from her blood-thirsty resolution and toward a policy of cool diplomacy. Given Glover's avowed patriotism, it seems clear that he painted Boadicia and Dumnorix as the leaders of rival factions, and that their personal relationship caused national disorder. In Bolingbroke's words, "A spirit of liberty will be always and wholly concerned about national interests, and very indifferent about personal and private interests. On the contrary, a spirit of faction will be always and wholly concerned about these and very indifferent about others."[298] Of course the denouement was the same as in previous Boudica plays: the Romans eventually win the day, but not before a few piteous British suicides take place along the way. Not the least of these is that of Boadicia's fictional sister and Dumnorix's wife, the hopelessly docile Venusia – the diametric opposite of the formidable Boadicia. The "spirit of factionalism" that prevailed amongst the Britons ultimately brings them ruin, and it is Venusia who articulates this when she begs Boadicia to "Yet let restoring union

[296] Stone, *TLS*, 409. There were 499 individual performances that season, 192 in David Garrick's Theatre Royal Drury Lane. Stone, *TLS* Pt.4, Vol. I, 375.
[297] "Boadicia, a tragedy by Mr. Glover, Adapted for theatrical representation, as performed at the Theatre-Royal, Drury Lane, Regulated from the Prompt-book, by Permission of the Managers" (London: 1791).
[298] Bolingbroke, "Remarks on the history of England", *Works*, Vol. 1, p. 294.

close our wounds…"[299] Given the close association between Glover's patriotism and that of the famous Bolingbroke, it seems likely that if Glover was not influenced directly by Bolingbroke's works, he was at least familiar with and sympathetic to the cultural idiom of patriotism that Bolingbroke's *oeuvre* articulated. The Boudica story was a means through with the writer and politician could explore the idea.

This more politically-minded reading of the play differs from that of Carolyn D. Williams, who insists that, as a man suspicious of female meddling in affairs beyond their ken, Glover painted Boudica in the worst light. Instead, he gave all the feminine glory to Venusia, who submits to her husband's will and commits suicide at the end of the play.[300] But, in contrast to his depiction of Boudica, Williams points out that Glover portrayed the Greek warrior women Artemisia and Melissa in his *Leonidas* as skilful and admirable leaders, as well as charming and womanly. Williams concludes that this must have been because it was appropriate for women outside of Britain to command troops in war, but "the prospect of British female generals [brought] the threat to masculinity too close to home".[301] Williams's argument assumes that Glover was, if not misogynistic, then at least suspicious enough of female influence to expend time and energy in writing a play about Boudica that did nothing more than demolish the idea of female power as absurd. But the play reflected the tastes of his patriot-whig literary circle, especially if we take the earlier date of 1742 as the point at which Glover began to formulate the work. Glover undoubtedly used Boudica's sex and drew on a familiar language of female/male dichotomy as an easy means by which he could create division

[299] R. Glover, *Boadicia, a tragedy* (London: 1753) 33.
[300] Williams, "'This frantic woman'", 31.
[301] Ibid.

between the titular character and the general Dumnorix, but it would seem that this was more incidental than central to the work.

Wendy Nielsen gives a more balanced view of the play when she suggests that Glover's work was characteristic of an expansionist-minded merchant class that championed imperialism.[302] However, while Richard Glover was an active member of a political class, it was one which primarily promoted the idea of a loyal opposition to the vulgar partisanship of the age of Walpole, not imperialism – or at least, not in the case of this play. It seems best in this case to trust contemporary opinion which saw the moral of Glover's play as being "to shew the fatal Effects of Division between Commanders".[303] As Christine Gerrard put it, "The active 'Patriot' ...was now less likely to be a rural squire than a tradesman living in London, Manchester, or Bristol, one who defined his patriotism through defence of 'national interest' in which Britain's commercial enterprise and colonial expansion played a central role."[304] In some ways, Glover was the prime example of this form of patriotism, but conscious expansionism and any associative identity with a growing empire did not take precedence over Glover's play's main point, which was to espouse a form of patriotism that had been most succinctly presented by Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke.

We can get a clearer view of contemporary reception and interpretations because Glover's *Boadicia* received more exposure in periodicals and generated more comment than earlier dramatic works about the same character. This commentary provides a sense of what contemporary audiences understood about the play. Glover's vision of the dangers of factionalism was not the sole point of concern for his contemporaries, and,

[302] Nielsen, "Boadicea onstage", 603.
[303] *Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1753. (BL, Vol, 23) 576-8.
[304] Gerrard, *Patriot opposition*, 6.

tellingly, the author's opinion of the female sex was not a matter for serious discussion. The matters of concern for contemporary writers were numerous and often focused on the more subtle elements of the play. To Henry Pemberton, Glover's work was uniquely praiseworthy among plays of its day for its succinct exemplification of human passion and error, according to his review published on 8 December, 1753 – very soon after, or possibly on, the play's opening night. Pemberton was one of Glover's old friends and supporters whom the latter had met soon after leaving school. In 1738, Pemberton had been highly appreciative of the soon-to-be infamous *Leonidas*, and his review of *Boadicia* nearly twenty years later continued this trend of supportive public commentary for his friend's works. In *Some Few Reflections on the Tragedy of Boadicia*, Pemberton made great claims for the innovative nature of Glover's new work. Without, Pemberton said, resorting to an overly embellished plotline, Glover's play held its audience's attention by "imitating after the justest manner human actions and passions."[305] Pemberton paid Glover the highest compliment by claiming that his play imitated the original – real life – which all others pretended to copy, but which vanishingly few did successfully. In this way the play was of the most esteemed sort, "where the catastrophe is brought about, not merely by the course of human affairs, but by some error in great and worthy characters."[306] This was a reference to Boudica's own part in her demise, something that other playwrights had explored before, although not in as much pathetic detail as Glover. There is an interesting parallel at work here. Pemberton believed that, as a dramatist, Glover should portray Boudica and her accompanying characters in the most realistic way possible, and he should ensure that they reflected true human nature in all its occasionally contradictory guises. This

[305] H.Pemberton, *Some few reflections on the Tragedy of Boadicia*. (London: M. Cooper, 1753).
[306] Pemberton, *Some few reflections*, 9.

parallels the demands of other reviewers, discussed below, whose animadversion focused on the disparity between the "real" Boudica of the historical record and the fictionalised one portrayed in the play.

An anonymous reviewer in *The Spectator* was dismissive of the play and contemptuous of its title character, at least the manner in which she was cast by Glover. The play's "Boadicia", the critic stated, begins as one character and ends as another and, "consequently, no one is under the least pain about what becomes of her, and begins to think the whipping she received was no more than what she deserved..."[307] This was not a judgment on the historical Boudica, but rather on the fictional version whose failings were entirely the fault of the playwright. The reviewer was equally scathing in his commentary on the main male character, Dumnorix, played by David Garrick, who "is a blusterer in the first part, a coward in the latter, and very weak in the last."[308] According to the reviewer, the play received a frosty reception from the audiences in town, and the blame for this was firmly on the shoulders of the author. Unlike Pemberton, the reviewer saw in the play an affront to human nature, not its apotheosis. "It is in writing as in painting, often authors, with design to make the characters more striking, make them unnatural, as bad painters to give expression, communicate distortion; and thus to make Boadicea more savage and unforgiving, he [Glover] has terminated in making her an idiot."[309] These comments were critical of Glover as a writer, not of the factual Boudica or her fictional counterpart, Dumnorix. They also wholly contradict the opinion of Henry Pemberton, who saw the contradictory personalities within the play as one of its most successful aspects.

[307] *The Spectator*, 29 December 1753.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Ibid.

Pemberton's opinion was in part shared by Crisp Mills, who offered his critique of the play in the form of a *Letter to Mr. Richard Glover* published in January 1754, soon after the negative review in *The Spectator*.[310] Mills began by citing what he took to be the approbation with which Glover's play had been received by audiences, a point which contradicts the *Spectator* reviewer's assessment of audience reception as cold and critical. Upon viewing the play himself, Mills's own reaction was one of "transport and rapture".[311] While the reviewer in *The Spectator* had been appalled by the contradictions in Boadicia's character and actions, and by her opposition to her fellow Britons, flaws which he attributed to the writer, Mills saw the contradictory personalities of the titular character as one of Glover's great achievements. Mills described his own inner struggle to decide who the more virtuous character in the play was. Boadicia, he realised, had been wronged and maltreated, and thus her revenge was perhaps justified, but Venusia's gentle attempts to sway her sister to show mercy to Roman captives appealed equally to his sensibilities.[312] "These extraordinary effects on the mind of the very spectator of any sensibility, you, Sir, awaken by the artless language of the passions."[313] A confused and confusing Boudica was a captivating character for the writer and the audience and had the potential to contribute to a positive reaction to the play. Pemberton and Mills both understood Glover's Boadicia character to have behaved in a manner that reflected the swaying passions of human life, and to capture this, they thought, was the ultimate aim of the dramatist.

[310] *Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer*, 12 January 1754.
[311] C. Mills, *A letter to Richard Glover on occasion of his tragedy of Boadicia*. (London: A. Linde, 1754) 4.
[312] Mills, *Letter*, 12.
[313] Mills, *Letter*, 15.

Yet more comment came from the historian William Rider (1723-1785) in 1754, in *A Comment on Boadicia*, a pamphlet priced at six pence and written in response to Crisp Mills's letter. Rider's *Comment* was also intended as a call to revive Glover's play from the previous year. Rider held Glover's *Boadicia* in great esteem, and more than other critics, his approbation took on a patriotic hue. On the subject of English drama, Rider wrote that any author who endeavoured to introduce regularity" and "delicacy" of taste to the theatre, in the manner of the French, should be universally applauded, "for thus by heightening the Character of Dramatic Poetry, he at the same Time aggrandizes that of the Nation." But, Rider continues, the varied, even shambolic nature of English drama which shunned the rigidity of the ancients was itself the result of the innate "love of liberty" to be found in the nation at large. Thus it too should be applauded as a virtue. In Rider's opinion, English dramatists had always been capable of conforming to rules, but had resisted the tyranny of the ancients in favour of their own original forays into poetry and drama. "Do we not admire the Height of Soul which has always characterized our Nation, and that Courage untamed by Oppression, for which Foreigners have so justly admired and applauded the English name."[314] That the subject of his glowing praise tinged with patriotic sentiment should be a play about Boudica and her time is no coincidence. Rider's comments demonstrate the overlapping concern with the quality and execution of dramatic poetry, patriotic subject matter, and the glorification of the nation's reputation abroad, as well as its history at home.

Crisp Mills's own view of the play was that it was not in fact a play at all, but rather a poem, or an unconnected series of dialogues with no discernible plot, or "intrigue" to unravel. This was not necessarily a damning criticism. Appealing, as

[314] W. Rider, *A comment on Boadicia, with remarks on Mill's Letter*, (London: 1754) 10.

Pemberton had, to the precepts of Aristotle, Mills asserted that the quality of dramatic verse and depth of emotion evident in Glover's *Boadicia* might be said to represent a new kind of entertainment, successful in its own way, but that it could not be called a play. It was the novelty of Glover's writing and staging that drew much of the contemporary comment.

But whether Glover was faithful to human nature or the mechanics of drama was a secondary concern for some reviewers whose main objection to the play was its deviation from the historical record. The anonymous author of *Female Revenge* even defended Boudica's historical reputation from what he saw as the impolitic pen of the poet. That reviewer claimed that, "nine Parts in ten of those present" in the audience for *Boadicia* had not encountered the tale before.[315] Nevertheless, in his review, Henry Pemberton asserted that the play was "founded on a well-known incident in British history." It is impossible to say exactly how well-known, but Glover's was the first Boudica play to elicit extensive comment on the divergence of a fictionalised Boudica and from the one found in the histories.

Glover's play was also the first to be published with an accompanying history, or what one modern scholar has called a "parasitical biography".[316] These works often accompanied the performance of a new dramatic work which took its inspiration from history. Aside from a biography of Boudica, other examples included *A Life of Coriolanus*, which accompanied the production of James Thomson's play *Coriolanus* (1749), and *Memoirs of the life of Robert Devereux…being a full explanation of all the*

[315] n.a, *Female Revenge or the British Amazon: Exemplified in the life of Boadicia* (London: M. Cooper, W. Reeve, C. Sympson, 1753) 22.
[316] D.A. Stauffer, "A parasitical form of biography", *Modern Language Notes* (1940) 289-292.

passages in the new tragedy of the Earl of Essex (1753) a play by Henry Jones.[317] That a "parasitical biography" of Oliver Cromwell was published in a preface to *Oliver Cromwell: an historical play* (1752), by Mr. George Smith Green, would seem to suggest that notoriety was not a barrier to parasitical biography. Authors took advantage of a historical character's prominence in the playhouse in order to sell short, cheap, ephemeral biographies of the man or woman's life, or an imagined version of it. This phenomenon presents us with one example of how historical culture spread itself outside the traditional boundaries of historiography, or even history plays, and is an early example of the new waves of biographical work that would come into being in the nineteenth century (Boudica's place in these will be discussed in the next chapter).

A Short History of Boadicia, Queen of Britain, being the story on which the tragedy is founded was likely to have been written by Glover himself, and it largely drew on Tacitus for its account of the first half of Boudica's story.[318] The author prefaced Cassius Dio's atrocity story with the cautionary phrase "as some authors say", a suggestion that the writer of the *Short History* was not prepared to endorse the veracity of Cassius Dio's explicit account in full. However, interestingly, the remainder of the *Short History* coincided with the action of Glover's play rather than the accounts by ancient or recent historical writers. As in Glover's play, Boudica emerges in the *Short History* as a haughty figure, ungrateful to her allies and proud to a fault: a fomenter of faction. It seems less likely that the intention of this work was to establish the "facts" of the Boudica story for an audience unaware of her, but was instead intended to augment Glover's work and to increase the level of public conversation

[317] Stauffer provides other examples. "Parasitical form of biography", 290.
[318] *A short history of Boadicia the British queen, being the story on which the tragedy is founded* (London: W. Reeve, 1754) 10.

around the play. It may also have been an act of naked profiteering on Glover's part, but this is difficult to say with any certainty. Commentaries tended to ignore the *Short History* and focus all their criticism on the play itself, so it seems likely that the parasitical biography was seen as an appendix to the main fictional work, not as an attempt at "serious" historical analysis.

One reviewer observed in relation to the disparity between Glover's play and the historical record:

> When a Piece of known History is converted into a Tragedy, the Poet constantly preserves a sacred regard to the Truth of the Characters of those great Personages whom he realizes upon the Stage....Has Mr. Glover done so with regards to Boadicea? I believe those who examine the antient Authors who give any Account of her, characterize her very differently from what he has done: Historians represent her as a Woman of undaunted Courage and Resolution, and of a Spirit and Magnanimity above her Sex; that she had suffer'd Injuries and Insults of the grossest Nature from the Hands of the Romans; for which she took a severe and just Vengeance on them as soon as it was in her Power. All this was agreeable to the Dictates of natural Justice. But no-where do we read, that she carried her Revenge to such an Extremity, as to sacrifice all Regards to Friendship, natural Affection, the Obligations of Honour and Justice, and her own, as well as the Interests of her People, to that implacable Passion; and therefore her Character is not only out of Nature, but without Precedent.[319]

This would seem to echo Thomas Salmon's objection to Paul de Rapin's history that "…here we find Poetry and Fiction intermix'd with our History," and in this case, as in Rapin's, the result was not pleasing to the reader or viewer.[320] The reviewer quoted above expected that because it was taken from history, a play about Boudica should have some obligation to be true to the established historical facts; facts which, after all, reflect human nature. For the reviewer, Boudica's unnatural savagery was unprecedented in history and this alone demolished any sense of the real. If history was the study of an unchanging human nature, as Tacitus and the humanist historians of the

[319] *Female Revenge,* 32.
[320] Salmon. *Modern History*, xii.

century saw it, and if dramas should seek to emulate or even capture this, then Glover's historical drama failed on all counts by shunning the dictates of both historical fact and human nature. Boudica, in that reviewer's opinion, could not have behaved in the manner Glover had portrayed because it was against the dictates of nature. *Female Revenge* was printed without an author, but its title page stated that it was "Calculated to instruct the Readers of this celebrated Tragedy, in that true History of one of the most memorable Transactions recorded in the British Annals; and to shew wherein Poetical Fiction has deviated from Real Facts."

As we have seen, Wendy Nielsen and Carolyn D. Williams have argued that eighteenth-century playwrights were making subtle attempts to convince audiences that men, not women, must lead the imperial project in Britain. This is not an unsupportable reading given the negativity surrounding the character of Boudica in the play – she was shown as haughty and unforgiving. Despite the continued popularity of Boudica as a subject for playwrights, it is impossible to make the unqualified argument that Boudica was a straightforward, unconfused figure, or to say that her actions and morals were never questioned by historians or playwrights. That the issue of Boudica's pride and defeat were still explored on stage, even at this relatively late juncture in her posthumous career, has been interpreted by scholars of literature as a reaction to Boudica's controversial position as both a woman and a leader. In truth it seems that a Boudica character that exhibited passionate, even irrational behaviour was more interesting and engaging for both author and audience, while also in keeping with the aims of a poet.

Glover's *Boadicia* spoke to an insular form of British patriotism, one predicated on countering emergent party factionalism with loyalty to the principles of liberty. His

Boudica character presented a warning of things to come if factionalism was allowed to prevail over the national interest. Glover's status as a public-spirited, non-partisan "Patriot Whig" was well-known to his contemporaries. This stance was supported by David Garrick himself in a letter to John Cleland (1710-1789), the cantankerous author of the infamous *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. Cleland's own play, *Vespasian*, had been passed over for performance at Garrick's Theatre-Royal Drury Lane, the very theatre where Garrick had played Glover's Dumnorix. Cleland wrote a haranguing letter to Garrick nearly twenty years after the rejection. Intent on opening old wounds, Cleland remarked, 'You brought on *Boadicia*, *Barbarossa*, and how many more, only fit to make an ice-house of a summer-theatre, if there was such a thing as Taste existing.'[321] Delayed by a bad cold, Garrick replied two days later: "Why do You raise the Ghosts of *Boadicia* and *Barbarossa* to haunt me? If I had not perform'd the first, I should have been a very Shallow Politician...'"[322] Glover's reputation as a man of impartiality and unassailable patriotism was reason enough for Garrick to stage what many, perhaps even the theatre proprietor himself, viewed as a mediocre work.

Part III. "Britons Strike Home"

We have seen from the preceding discussion that Boudica's presence in British historical culture can reveal the growing market for national histories, as well as the shifting manner in which the content of such histories was portrayed to the reader. We have also seen that the theatre continued to play a significant role in the development of

[321] John Cleland to David Garrick, 22 May 1772. (Forster Collection. 28. 213. 48. F. 28. National Art Library.)This was the second such letter Cleland had sent to Garrick, the first having been sent in 1754 and having much the same message.
[322] David Garrick to John Cleland, 24 May 1772, *The Letters of David Garrick*, David M. Little and George M. Kahrl, Phoebe. DeK. Wilson (eds) (London: Oxford University Press, 1963) Vol. II, Letter 689, pg. 802

Boudica's individuality. By making detailed forays into Boudica's private life, or an imagined idea of it, the story was being fleshed out from its original version in Tacitus and Dio. And finally, we have begun to understand how Boudica's patriotic image developed through these media, and by virtue of predating the more hotly contested pasts of the Anglo-Saxons and the Conquest. But the effect of the patriotic Boudica on British historical culture was not limited to her person. That is, her name did not necessarily have to appear in order for her legacy to spread ideas of British patriotism. This aspect of Boudica's patriotic reputation is by its nature very different from that expounded by Glover, which saw the character of Boudica as a means of demonstrating the dangers of factionalism. The slogan, "Britons strike home" was, it seems, more about uniting people in a common national identity rooted in a long past; a past which the appellation "Britons" could encompass more easily than the divisive Anglo-Saxons. "Britons" allowed identification with historical continuity to take the place of an ethnic heritage, the scope for which was limited to the people of England. In Bolingbroke's phrasing, all Celts, Saxons, and Normans came from the same "Northern hive" and were thus all able to be called "Britons" so long as they upheld the old "Gothic" constitution.[323]

The enduring popularity of the song "Britons Strike Home," first performed as part of George Powell's *Bonduca* in 1696, is the most surprising yet overlooked aspect of Boudica's place in British historical culture and in the growing patriotic discourse of the eighteenth century.[324] The play was performed intermittently before an audience of theatre-goers, and was also available in printed editions to readers in London throughout

[323] Cottret, *Bolingbroke's political writings*, 71. For a discussion of the "Gothic" in patriot whig discourse, see Gerrard, *Patriot opposition*, pp. 108-149.
[324] But see discussion in S. Putigny, "Song cultures and national identities in eighteenth-century Britain, c. 1707-1800." Unpublished PhD thesis. (King's College London, 2012).

the first half of the century. The first performance in Dublin was in the 1737-38 season.[325] Beyond Powell's play, the accompanying music penetrated into contexts that the spoken words could not. Fletcher's original *Bonduca* had "called for song after song" and so the play had a strong musical tradition associated with it before Powell's revisions; Fletcher's own music has not survived.[326] The music in George Powell's play was by the eminent composer Henry Purcell (1659-1695), who was among the most respected and renowned British composers of his age, and indeed of any.[327] Purcell's musical score for Powell's *Bonduca* was one of the last of his works before his death. After its first appearance as part of *Bonduca*, the song "To Arms", also known as "Britons Strike Home" or "The Druid's Song" became what can only be characterised as sensationally popular. The story of "Britons Strike Home" provides an intriguing glimpse into the way in which a single element of historical culture can transform and penetrate into realms beyond its original. The phrase "Britons Strike Home" came from a song which was derived from a play, which was itself derived from another play, which was in turn derived from the histories of Camden, Holinshed, and even Tacitus. This was a process that took centuries, and although the phrase was put to patriotic purposes, we should not overlook the fact that it was anything but an "invention" cobbled together at the behest of present circumstances, unconnected to what came before.

The original words of the 1696 song were from a scene in *Bonduca* in which the Druid leaders prophesied British victory over the Roman invaders:

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[325] J. Greene, "The repertory of the Dublin Theatres, 1720-1745". *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr* (1987) 133-148, p. 142.
[326] van Lennep, *TLS*, Part 1, Vol I, cxvi.
[327] See Price, *Henry Purcell*; R. Luckett, '"Or rather our musical Shakespeare': Charles Burney's Purcell", C. Hogwood and R. Luckett (eds), *Music in eighteenth-century England: essays in honour of Charles Cudworth*, (1983) 59–77.

> Britons strike home,
> Revenge your country's wrongs
> Fight, fight and record
> Yourselves in Druid's songs.[328]

In addition to being performed, the play's music and lyrics were published in a printed edition in 1696 as *The Songs in the Tragedy of Bonduca*. But "To Arms/Britons Strike Home" took on a life of its own outside the play. As *Bonduca* was being performed at Drury Lane, "Britons Strike Home" began to make regular appearances as an *entr'acte* piece during the performance of other plays. In January 1704, "Britons Strike Home" was advertised as a standalone musical number for performance as part of a concert at Drury Lane, the first, but by no means the last time that this would happen.[329]

"Britons Strike Home" eventually rivalled "God Save the King" as an anthem of national celebration. The latter had fallen out of public favour after the reign of James I and did not reappear until 1745. When it did, it had to compete with Purcell's celebrated song, which had become a customary accompaniment to public shows of patriotic sentiment.[330] One scholar of music has called the song "a veritable Patriot war anthem".[331] *The Gentleman's Magazine* records one instance in 1739 when George II "went to the Play-House with the Duke and Princesses, whence the Tune of Britons Strike Home, &x, being play'd for a Dance, the House seconded it with a loud and long Huzza."[332] The War of Jenkins' Ear gave the song renewed meaning for a popular audience, who saw the Britons in the song "striking home" the blow against the enemy,

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[328] *The songs in the tragedy of Bonduca* (London: 1696).
[329] Avery, *TLS*, Part 2, Vol. I., 52.
[330] "The Canon, or grace, Non nobis Domine, and the national anthem, God save the King..." (Newcastle: Edward Walker, 1822) *Cowen Tracts*. [http://www.jstor.org/stable/60202201]
[331] B. Joncus, "Handel at Drury Lane: ballad opera and the production of Kitty Clive" *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, (2006) 179-226, p. 221, n. 81.
[332] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 27 October 1739 (BL. V.9, 553).

and it was sung in the streets during spontaneous displays of anti-Spanish sentiment.[333] At the height of the conflict, Edward Phillips produced a play called *Britons, strike home; or, the Sailors Rehearsal*, which exploited the popularity of the song. In one scene, the main female character, played by the popular actress Kitty Clive,[334] insists that "…there's a great deal in having Politicks set to a proper Tune; thank our Stars, they have lately been set to the Tune of Britons strike home; and there is not an Englishman in the Kingdom, but thinks it the best Tune that has been play'd these several Years . . . I have observed that Tunes and Songs have a very great effect on Publick Affairs, and I know no better way of Providing the Truth of my Observation than by a Song." She then embarked on a rousing rendition of the tune.[335] On 4 November 1740, the bells of St. Patrick's Church in Dublin were set to play Purcell's song to mark Lord Vernon's birthday.[336]

Kitty Clive's pronouncement that "Tunes and Songs have a great effect on Publick Affairs" continued to be proven true throughout the century. When the Prince and Princess of Wales attended a staging of *The Merchant of Venice* at Covent Garden in 1739, there came a request for "Britons Strike Home" and the song was duly performed for the royal attendees.[337] In 1744, during the War of the Austrian Succession, the theatrical press recorded a number of performances of "Britons Strike Home", some at the behest of the crowd. When not played by request, most

[333] K. Wilson, "Empire, trade and popular politics in mid-Hanoverian Britain: the case of Admiral Vernon", *Past & Present.* (1988) 74-109, p. 81. See also B. Joncus, "Handel at Drury Lane".
[334] Coincidentally, Tate Wilkinson compared Clive to Boudica in his memoirs: "The valiant Boadicea never hurled her spear with more fervour than Clive, that Amazonian Thalestris of Drury-Lane theatre, pursued that great general, Garrick, whenever he offended her; indeed the whole green-room dreaded her frowns." T. Wilkinson, *Memoirs of His Own Life* (York: 1790) Vol. 3, p. 43.
[335] Quoted in T. McGeary, "Farinelli in Madrid: opera, politics, and the War of Jenkins' Ear" *The Musical Quarterly* (1998) 383-421, p 406.
[336] *London Evening Standard*, 11 November 1740.
[337] *General Advertiser*, 14 March 1744.

advertisements for "Britons Strike Home" acknowledged Purcell's *Bonduca* as the source of the music, so it was not lost to posterity that the work had originally accompanied a play about the ancient warrior queen. By the time of the Seven Years War "...even Children just weaned from the Breast, were taught to lisp, 'BRITONS STRIKE HOME'".[338] It had attained the status of an "old English ballad" by 1792.[339] The continued conflicts with France at the end of the eighteenth century saw "Britons Strike Home" still as familiar as "Rule Britannia" and "God Save the King"; the three songs were often performed together as part of a number of patriotic concerts held in the London theatres in the 1790s, when war with France was ongoing. On 7 May 1794, there was a staging of patriotic music, "Britons Strike Home" included, that was followed by "...an exact Representation of the Death of General Wolfe".[340]

The phrase "Britons Strike Home" took on a life entirely independent of Powell's play and Purcell's music, and entered into common parlance as a popular patriotic expression. Even where public performance of the song from which it derived was not possible, we find references to "Britons Strike Home" as a stand-alone slogan. For example, in 1739, a series of medals was struck to commemorate the victory at Porto Bello.[341] One of these medals portrayed a seated figure of Britannia brandishing a sword on one side, and a British solder, also with a drawn sword, standing over a fallen enemy on the other. The Britannia side was embossed with the words "I'll Revenge My Wrongs," and the sentence "Britons Strike Home" appeared above the victorious British

[338] *Westminster Journal and London Political Miscellany*, 20 October 1764.
[339] *World (1787)*, 5 December 1792.
[340] C. B. Hogan, *TLS*, Part 5, Vol. III, 1645.
[341] E. Hawkins, W.A. Franks, H. Grueber (eds), *Medallic illustrations of the history of Great Britain and Ireland to the death of George II*, Vol. .II, (London, British Museum Press, 1885) 529.

soldier on the opposite side.[342] The medal was probably the work of James Roettier, who became goldsmith to Louis XV upon returning to his native France. It was of crude workmanship and was mostly sold in toyshops,[343] but again, it demonstrates both Boudica's effect on popular patriotism and the way in which one medium gave rise to another.

The phrase "Britons Strike Home" often appeared alongside the established patriotic symbols, Britannia and John Bull.[344] It made frequent appearances in satirical prints from the 1760s up until the war with Napoleon. It could be used as a patriotic slogan directed at enemies foreign, but also at domestic ones, as was the case with John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, so maligned by John Wilkes in *The North Briton*. A satirical songsheet was published in 1770 in which the words and music appeared alongside a picture of Bute's head atop a jackboot (a pun on the Earl's name – Bute sounding very much like "boot" in Scots, and Jack was a common nickname for John) facing an axe.[345] The phrase may have been used as a comment on Bute's Scottishness: "Britons Strike Home" perhaps intended to mean "North Britons Go Home".[346] In 1803, we find the phrase "Britons Strike Home" accompanying the seated figure of John Bull, who is himself grasping a small, rigid Napoleon Bonaparte around the neck with one hand and

[342] British Museum Coins and Medals Department, MB2p529.91
[343] Hawkins and Grueber, *Medallic illustrations*, 737.
[344] For whom see J. Surel, "John Bull" in R. Samuel (ed). *Patriotism: the making and umaking of British national identity: national fictions.* (London: Routledge, 1989) pp. 3-25, and M. Dresser. "Britannia" in Samuel (ed), *Patriotism*, pp. 26-49.
[345] "Britons Strike Home, An Old Song to a New Tune", 1770 BM Satire 4366.
[346] The apologetic Scotsman James Boswell imagined the radical journalist John Wilkes beating the tune on a drum as he pursued the Prime Minister, by then resigned, out of London. In Boswell's opinion, Bute had lacked the wherewithal to perform as prime minister. F.A. Pottle (ed), *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-1763* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000) 309.

drawing a sword across Napoleon's middle with the other. The caption tells us John Bull is "playing the Base Villain."[347]

It appeared alongside John Bull again in 1807 in "Malignant Aspects looking with envy on John Bull and his satelites, or a new planetary system" (see Figure 4). The image was intended to convey an idea of Britain surrounded by its enemies, but protected by its "wooden wall" of British navy ships. John Bull, or Britain, is the centre of the universe, the object of scorn from both "major" (America, France, Russia) and "minor" (Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, etc) threats. Most of the image is shrouded in grey cloud, but John Bull sits in a homey scene with his pipe, his jug of punch, and his loyal dog, surrounded by ships of the British navy. Around him in a circle are engraved the phrases, "Old England's Wooden Walls", "God Save the King", "Britannia Rules the Waves", and "Britons Strike Home", showing once again that the phrase was of the same resonant popularity in the period as the more well-known slogans which have survived to the present century.[348] While the character of Boudica was not present in the cartoons, it was ultimately her reputation that had brought "Britons Strike Home" to a wide audience. Without Powell's *Bonduca*, there would have been no "Britons strike home". Purcell's original version of the tune and words, complete with Druidic references, were published on song sheets as late as 1795. "Britons Strike Home" also became the motto for the Lloyd's Patriotic Fund, founded in 1803.[349] There was a report, many years after the fact, that the song had been sung in the House of Commons in 1797.[350]

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[347] "John Bull Playing on the Base Villain". (1803) BM Satire 10142.
[348] "Malignant aspects looking with envy…" (1807) BM Satires 10768.
[349] See J. Gawler, *Britons strike home: a history of the Lloyd's Patriotic Fund, 1803-1988* (Surrey: Pittot Publishing, 1993).
[350] *The Manchester Guardian*, 11 June 1921.

This simple phrase resonated with people, whether under threat from France, Spain, or even from the authorities within their own country, and the phrase persisted in popular culture well into the nineteenth century. The political cartoonist George Cruikshank used "Britons Strike Home" as the title for his visceral satirical portrayal of the Peterloo Massacre in 1819 (see Figure 5).[351] Cruickshank used the "Britons strike home" sarcastically, by coupling it with an image of fat British officers clubbing defenceless protestors, mostly women, as they attempt to flee. One of the officers is shouting encouragement: "…remember the more you Kill the less poor rates you'll have to pay so go it Lads show your Courage & your Loyalty!"[352] Clearly the phrase was familiar enough to have its meaning effectively turned upside down. The Britons were turned against each other here and striking their own "home". Later in the century, "Britons strike home" appeared on banners during the Chartist agitation, again demonstrating how it could be employed in both domestic and foreign contexts.[353]

Despite its decades of success and the prominence of the phrase, the song "Britons Strike Home" did not have the same staying power as "God Save the King". One must wonder whether references to Druids lost relevance for an audience steeped in the religious and moral sentiments of the nineteenth century. Simple changes in taste may have contributed to "Britons Strike Home" falling away from the patriotic repertoire by the time Queen Victoria came to the throne, although we find a reference

[351] "Massacre at St Peters, or 'Britons Strike Home'!!!" (1819) BM Satires 13258.
[352] See A.J. Cross, "'What a World We Make the Oppressor and the Oppressed': George Cruikshank, Percy Shelley, and the Gendering of Revolution in 1819". *ELH*, 71:1. 2004. pp. 167-207. p. 201, n 2. Cross makes the mistake of focusing on the word "strike" in this cartoon, stating that it was a loaded word for Cruikshank to "choose" during a period of mass demonstrations. Cross must not have been aware of "Britons Strike Home" as a popular patriotic phrase from the period. The only way Cruikshank could have changed the meaning of the phrase is to emphasize parts of it himself, which he did in fact do. Cruikshank underlined and thus emphasised the word "Home", making that the most evocative part of the familiar phrase.
[353] *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 23 January 1841.

to its performance, along with the rest of the score from Purcell's *Bonduca*, in 1909.[354] The association between this incredibly popular eighteenth-century song and the increasingly "famous" Boudica has long gone unnoticed by scholars of popular music, as well as by scholars who study representations of Boudica. This once again shows the utility of allowing the subject – in this case Boudica – to dictate the course of enquiry. Doing so opens unexpected avenues for research and gives a fuller picture of how historical figures penetrate beyond specific cultural moments.

The song "Britons Strike Home" was used to excellent effect by George Colman in his revival of Fletcher's *Bonduca* in 1778. In the next part of this chapter, I will discuss the play as an example of Boudica's familiar story acting as a draw for audiences, and thus as a lucrative subject for new theatre managers. The play also exploited the fear of invasion and sense of defensive patriotism which suffused much cultural discourse in late eighteenth century.[355] After that discussion, we will move on to chart Boudica's place in images, as well as in poetry and other popular media of the period.

Part IV. Colman's Revived *Bonduca* (1778)

Unlike in Glover's case, an exploration of patriotism and factionalism was not the primary motive for George Colman, manager of the theatre at Haymarket and well-known actor, in putting on a play about Boudica. Colman had very different motives: it can hardly have been a coincidence that the play was acted the same year that Colman published his newly edited edition of the collected works of Beaumont and Fletcher.[356]

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[354] *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 November 1909.
[355] See Colley, *Britons*.
[356] G. Colman (ed.) *The dramatick works of Beaumont and Fletcher* (London: 1778)

That he chose to revive *Bonduca* does suggest that the play's theme of native gumption in the face of imminent foreign invasion were relevant to the theatre-going public if the late eighteenth century. It also showed Colman's personal and professional enthusiasm for the lost greatness of Fletcher's works, and served as an advertisement for his own new edition of the works. One theatre correspondent in the *London Advertiser* noted that Fletcher's republished *Bonduca*, "abounds with dramatick and poetick excellence" and, comparing it with Shakespeare's *King John,* found the latter lacking.[357] Colman's new collection was arguably part of his own personal effort to restore Beaumont and Fletcher to "a second place in the English Drama, nearer to the first than the third, to those of Shakespeare".[358] Colman's reproduction of *Bonduca* was in part an homage to John Fletcher, as well as an appeal to contemporary antagonisms against the French, a point Wendy Nielsen has also acknowledged.[359]

In spite of George Powell's reworked *Bonduca* of 1696, George Colman was rightly able to claim that his theatre's *Bonduca* had not been acted in 150 years. Performances of the play were relatively few, perhaps because it was a grand effort on Colman's part. As manager, he had "spared neither cost nor trouble to do it due honour...both in point of performance and decoration."[360] The play was performed at the Haymarket Theatre on 30 July 1778 and was acted twelve more times in the ensuing months up to September.[361] It was also revived for the following four theatrical seasons.[362] Glover's *Boadicia* had elicited extensive and varied animadversion from other authors in the press and elsewhere, but Colman's revival received wider and less

[357] *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*. 20 May 1778.
[358] Colman, *The Dramatick Works,*. Prologue.
[359] Nielsen, "Boadicea onstage", 605.
[360] *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*. 31 July 1778.
[361] Hogan. *TLS*, Part 5, Vol. I. 111, 185-190.
[362] Hogan, *TLS*, pp. 261, 353, and 439.

critical coverage, usually taking the form of lengthy descriptions of the action of the play reproduced in the press for the benefit of those who could not see it performed on stage.

The prologue to the work, penned by David Garrick, made the explicit connection between "the invasion of Britain by the Romans, in the days of the bold Queen of the Iceni, and the invasion which the timid women of this day dread from... the French."[363]

> To modern Britons let the old appear
> This night to rouse 'em for this anxious
> year:
> To raise the spirit, which of yore was rais'd,
> Made even Romans tremble while they prais'd:
> To rouse that spirit, which thro' every age
> Has wak'd the lyre, and warm'd th' historian's
> page...
> Now, while the angry trumpet sounds alarms,
> And all the nation cries, To Arms, to arms:
> Then would his native strength each Briton know,
> And scorn the treats of an invading foe:
> Hatching and feeding every civil broil,
> France looks with envy on our happy soil...[364]

Garrick's words "inspired the whole audience with an enthusiastic zeal for the love of their country."[365] Following the disputes earlier in the century between the "patriot opposition" and the government of Walpole, Boudica's image was here being used in a simplified way. She was more straightforwardly cast as leading the resistance against a foreign invader, a much more direct parallel between past and present, and one certainly aimed at eliciting an emotional response from an audience already primed to find such a parallel.

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[363] Ibid.
[364] Garrick, "Prologue", *Bonduca*. (London: T. Caddell, 1778).
[365] *General Evening Post*, 30 July 1778.

The prologue also alluded to the words of Henry Purcell's accompanying music which was revived with Colman's version of the play. The song would almost certainly have been familiar to much of the audience and might also have contributed in some measure to positive reaction to the play. The published synoptic accounts were accompanied by extensive reviews and descriptions of the audience reaction, some of which was in response to Purcell's famous song, the lyrics of which were also printed in the dailies: "The plot of the play is well known to be the defeat of Bonduca, by the Roman General Suetonius... It has undergone no very material alterations in the present revisal. ... It abounds more with *good sentiments*, than *good situations*; but breathing through it a spirit of war, it was received with much applause, particularly the song composed by the great Purcell of 'the oracle for war declares.' We never remember such a burst of applause, as on the chorus of this old English ballad. Every breast seemed to be on fire, and gave an unerring pledge of the sentiments of the nation on the present situation of affairs."[366] By including "Britons Strike Home", it was said that Colman's play, "showed to what national service a theatre might be made, when in the hands of a gentleman of genius and judgment."[367] Colman's *Bonduca* was recommended in the press to discontented officers in the Royal Navy. They should look to the character of the Roman general Penius, who took his own life after showing reluctance to do battle with the invading Britons, to find an example of "the fatal effects of contumacy, and shrinking from their duty in the hour of danger..."[368]

Colman's play was intended to appeal to the patriotic sentiments of an audience about to enter a foreign war, but the manager was also trying to create a vogue for

[366] *General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer*, 31 July 1778.
[367] *General Evening Post*, 30 July 1778.
[368] *Lloyd's Evening Post, Public Advertiser, General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer*, 5 April 1779.

Fletcher's work which in turn might benefit him financially. The reasoning and message – insofar as there was one – behind Colman's restaging of *Bonduca* would seem straightforward enough, but according to Wendy Nielsen, Colman "tailored the play and its publicity for an audience worried about the impact of women on war."[369] This conclusion is misleading and based on a myopic preoccupation with the supposed misogynist subtext that surrounded Boudica. That Colman should have revived a play from Fletcher's repertoire seems understandable considering he had just published a new edition of the collected works of Beaumont and Fletcher. *The Tragedie of Bonduca* seems a natural choice for a revival given that its title character was still recognisable and interesting to an audience almost two hundred years after the first performance, and its subject matter spoke to contemporary problems. A revival of Fletcher's *Bonduca* also allowed Colman to return to Purcell's rousing patriotic score, which had been pleasing crowds for decades. Arguably, the chance to hear "Britons Strike Home" in its original context could have served to lure audiences to Colman's theatre.

Alluding to all the stage plays before 1800 (all of which have been part of the discussion in this thesis) Wendy Nielsen has asserted that Boudica, "probably appeals to reading audiences more than theatregoers, and she owes whatever longevity she has in the British imagination to her presence in the reading room."[370] This conclusion assumes that audiences either read Boudica in the histories, *or* they watched Boudica on the stage. It does not allow for the possibility that any one impression of the character might have been informed by exposure to more than one version of the same story, or that audiences received histories differently than they did plays. It assumes that there was no widely understood distinction between the historical and the dramatic Boudica.

[369] Nielsen, "Boadicea onstage", 605.
[370] Nielsen, "Boadicea onstage", 607.

This is not borne out by the commentary surrounding Glover's play, or by the many portrayals of Boudica in national histories which bore striking differences from the elaborated versions found in plays. As Bolingbroke put it:

> A tale well told, or a comedy or a tragedy well wrought up, may have a momentary effect upon the mind, by heating the imagination, surprising the judgment, and affecting strongly the passions… But then these impressions cannot be made, nor this little effect be wrought, unless the fables bear an appearance of truth. When they bear this appearance, reason connives at the innocent fraud of imagination; reason dispenses in favour of probability, with those strict rules of criticism that she has established to try the truth of fact: but, after all, she receives these fables as fables; and as such only she permits imagination to make the most of them. If they pretended to be history, they would be soon subjected to another and more severe examination. What may have happened, is the manner of an ingenious fable: what has happened is that of an authentic history: the impressions which one or the other makes are in proportion.[371]

Part V. Images of Boudica, and other new manifestations of historical culture

The years between 1640 and the mid-eighteenth century saw a fall in the number of works in which illustrations of Boudica could be found. But the visual element of Boudica's story experienced a renaissance in the mid-eighteenth century. Many new "hack" histories, the more recent versions of those discussed in the previous chapter, included images of Boudica. This section will focus on these printed images of Boudica and the histories in which they appeared. It will also begin to unravel the ways in which Boudica's story travelled into the first decades of the nineteenth century, a crucial period that will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five. I will argue that aside from elaborated fictionalised accounts, book illustrations were a primary means by which Boudica's individual identity circulated in a relatively new and increasingly accessible form. That Boudica should have been chosen as the subject for an illustration in spite of

[371] Bolingbroke, *Letters on the study and use of history*, 319.

the relatively small amount of space available for images even in new works suggests once again that the ancient queen's story held an evocative appeal to the audience's passions and patriotism, more than many other episodes in British history. From this discussion of Boudica's image, we will then move on to her appearance in other modes, most notably William Cowper's immensely popular poem of 1782, as well as other manifestations of Boudica in historical culture which are significant measures of her popularity, but which have not been mentioned in previous works on her reputation.

First, we will return to Tobias Smollett's *Complete History* (1757), the textual content of which I discussed in the previous chapter. As made clear in the description of Smollett's history in the previous chapter that the work was not a dry, jejune disquisition on the origins of the English constitution, but rather an example of an entertaining history, affordably priced, and aimed at a wide audience. However, Smollett's *Complete History* was of special interest in one other aspect: it was adorned by an original image of Boudica, still a rare occurrence in the mid-century. The first edition of the *Complete History* was released in four large volumes with only one illustration in each. An original image of Boudica appeared as the frontispiece of the very first volume, and thus Boudica introduced the whole work; however, she only appeared in the first four-volume edition, not the serialized weekly numbers (see Figure 6). The illustrations for Smollett's volumes were by Francis Hayman (1707/8-1776), a well-known illustrator and painter, and Charles Grignion (1721-1810), a Huguenot engraver. As discussed in Chapter One, George Glover's illustration published in Thomas Heywood's *Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts of Nine of the Most Worthy Women*... (1640) showed Boudica divorced from her context. Glover's work was more like a portrait: it showed only one figure, and emphasised Boudica's physical features,

manner of dress, and accoutrements. Hayman's 1757 illustration depicted a busy scene and showed a much more detailed imaging of how the native Britons had appeared before the final battle. The *Complete History* showed Boudica seated in a chariot, a mode of conveyance well-documented in the histories, but which had not conventionally been included in illustrations up to this point. Boudica was depicted as being in the company of an assortment of ancient Britons, with an oak grove, peopled by Druids, visible in the background. The illustration did not have a caption, perhaps indicating that readers were expected to have been aware of Boudica's story before they read about it in Smollett's new history. From the appearance of the Druids, of Boudica's chariot, and from the hare at her side (which, according to Dio, Boudica released as a good omen to her troops before their final defeat), the viewer can see immediately that the central character is Boudica, ancient Queen of the Iceni.

However, the message of the picture, if one was intended, is ambiguous. The background scene would seem to show a supplicant Briton at the feet of a Druid elder, perhaps an allusion to the undemocratic nature of their authority. In the foreground we see a shaggy mongrel dog lapping at the spilled contents of an upturned barrel, one eye cast towards a man who appears to be napping on the barrel itself, and thus indifferent to the fate of his burden. As for Boudica, she appears to have employed a chariot-driver, whose stooped posture and shadowy features denote something less than a willingness to take on the role. Taken together, it is difficult to see this image as an heroic portrayal of the time in which Boudica lived. As Sam Smiles noted in his reading of the image, this bare-breasted Boudica and her savage accomplices were perhaps "too rough and

ready for polite taste".[372] As we will see, later visual portrayals differed from the scene presented here. But Boudica's place at the beginning of Smollett's history, and the lack of explanatory caption, indicate the prominence of the ancient queen in historical culture at this stage.

Boudica's role in the visual aspect of eighteenth-century histories varied. It was only on rare occasions after Smollett's *History* that Boudica appeared as the frontispiece for new works. As the century progressed, rather than show a particular episode from the history contained in the book, frontispiece or introductory images were used to explicate in visual terms the relationship between the British nation, liberty, history, legitimacy, and nobility. Some depicted the figure of Liberty presenting Magna Carta to a British nobleman. A variation on this showed a noblemen and the figure of Britannia with their hands joined on Magna Carta, sometimes with Liberty looking on approvingly in the background.[373] Another popular subject for late eighteenth-century frontispieces was a scene depicting the deposit of a newly printed history into the hands of Britannia, or into a temple of honour.[374] Such illustrations show the extent to which the past was inseparable from nationhood and a noble form of impartial patriotism. As John Baxter, the author of a *New and Impartial History of England* for the London Corresponding Society put it, "it is the duty of every individual to promote, as much as in his power, the knowledge of [the] constitution… By a knowledge of the History of England we are able to contrast the present with former times; to see where our liberties

[372] S. Smiles, *The image of antiquity: ancient Britain and the Romantic imagination* (London: Yale University Press, 1994). 161.
[373] See for instance, J. Newbury, *A new history of England* (London: J. Newbury, 1761); J. Barrow, *A new and impartial history of England* (London: J. Coote, 1763); W.H. Montague, *A new and universal history of England* (London: J. Cooke, 1771); C.A. Ashburton, *New and complete history of England* (London: W. and J. Stratford, 1791).
[374] See for instance S. Temple, *A new and complete history of England* (London: J. Cooke, 1773);E. Barnard, *A new, impartial, and complete history of England* (London: Alex Hogg, 1790).

are invaded, or in danger; and learn, from example, how the evil is to be prevented."[375] An original image of Boudica appeared on page 21 of Baxter's narrative of the national past (see Figure 7). Although it was original, the picture resembled Holinshed's and Seymour's, discussed below, in its portrayal of Boudica's large armed following, and the proximity of Druids and Druidic objects such as the tall pole topped with a sun design visible on the right.

Earlier, Boudica had appeared as the frontispiece to Edward Seymour's *History of England* (1764) with the caption "Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, animating the Britons to redeem their liberty" (see Figure 8). It is not a highly detailed illustration and there is no signature evident on the image to point to its creator, but it does present an original image of Boudica. Given the relative paucity of images of her available at the time, the introduction of a new one was of some importance to her evolution as a figure immersed in a narrative to one singled out for individual veneration. As in Smollett's image, the image in Seymour's history also depicted a bare-breasted Boudica, this time in a manner meant to evoke classical heroines rather than to show the barbarism of previous ages. In all other respects, the image more closely resembles Holinshed's woodcut than Smollett's engraving. Seymour's showed Boudica atop a raised dais of earth, possibly a rock or tree trunk, in the manner described by Dio. The sea of spears behind her also harkens back to the sixteenth-century quasi-Elizabethan image of Boudica found in Holinshed. The presence of a well-organised, fully-armed and armoured squad of Britons also invokes the more recent past. The Druids are distinguishable by their long hair and beards, but while Smollett's Druids appeared in the background and took on a shadowy, almost menacing character (compounded by the

[375] J. Baxter, *A new and impartial history of England from the most early period of genuine historical evidence....* (London: H.D. Symonds, 1796) vi.

beseeching Briton at their feet), these Druids mingle with the foreground imagery of supporting characters in a more egalitarian fantasy of Boudica's age. The caption, "Boadicea Queen of the Iceni, Animating the Britons to redeem their Liberty", leaves no question as to the intended nobility of the image.

This caption along with Boudica's appearance before the title page of Seymour's *History* suggests yet again her association in the historical imagination with patriotic sentiment and the defence of liberty. It was also testimony to Seymour's larger purpose in writing his history, which was to reject "the suggestions of fancy and party prejudice" and to be "descriptive of the intrinsic merit of every action, incident to so copious a DRAMA of human life…In a word, prompted by a love to my country, and fired with the sincerest zeal for its honour, I have contributed my endeavour to perpetuate its glories, and immortalize its name."[376] As had been the case as early as John Seller's *History* in 1696, Boudica continued to be a favourite subject for the dramatisation and romanticisation of the British past, this time in the visual medium. For Seymour, as for Seller and the many other historical writers discussed above, this did not diminish Boudica's historic character, but rather showed that history could elevate the patriotism of the reader (or viewer) while simultaneously maintaining fidelity to the known or established elements of individual episodes.

As often happened in these works of history, the image that first appeared in Edward Seymour's *Complete History* appeared twice more: once in Hugh Clarendon's *History of England* (1770), and then again in Charlotte Cowley's *The Ladies' History of England* (1780). Hugh Clarendon's retelling of Boudica's story carried a tone of judgment rarely encountered before the more biographical works of the nineteenth

[376] E. Seymour, *The complete history of England* (London: W. Hoggard, 1764) Preface, v-vi.

century. The author concluded that, while it was both brave and just to rebel after the injuries she and her family suffered, Boudica deserved her ultimate end because her revenge had been so savage as to be devastating to her cause. Clarendon had no compunction in making such an opinion clear, but neither did he feel, as Milton had, that Boudica needed to be silenced or hidden, as the illustration between pages 15 and 16 of his *History* shows.[377]

Perhaps the most reproduced image of Boudica in the late eighteenth century was by Thomas Stothard (1753-1834).[378] This work presents a novel trend in visualising Boudica (see Figure 9). Up until this point there has been little reason to mention the idea of the Celtic Revival as this event did not precipitate a shift in Boudica's image – although it was important for the image of ancient Britain more generally.[379] It seems that Stothard's illustration of Boudica does present some of the more romanticised tendencies typical of Celtic Revivalist and romantic art, as described by Sam Smiles. Boudica's appearance in this vein may have been part of a widespread turn toward the romanticisation of history, not specifically to do with her potential to be associated with Celtic identity, about which I will say more in Chapter Five. Stothard was a painter who produced some 5,000 designs for hundreds of illustrated works of history and fiction.[380] This particular illustration appeared for the first time in Raymond's *History of England* (1787), and shows some of the influences one might associate with the romanticism of the Celtic Revival. Stothard did not present Boudica as a savage, or as a comical figure in a wicker chariot, as Smollett's illustrator had. Instead he showed her as a softened

[377] H. Clarendon, *A new and authentic history of England* (London: J. Cooke, 1770).
[378] M. G. Sullivan. "Stothard, Thomas (1755–1834)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn, Sept 2012. [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26603, accessed 8 Aug 2012].
[379] Smiles, *The image of antiquity* (1994) gives a thorough overview.
[380] D. Bland, *A history of book illustration*. (London: Faber & Faber, 1969) 63.

figure draped in modest robes, with loose, flowing hair. Stothard chose to show Boudica as she laid flames to the walls of London; he depicted her on foot, waving a torch aloft as she looked backward over her shoulder in a gesture of encouragement to the company of armed troops behind her. Stothard's Boudica is still undeniably violent; but without the encumbrances of chariot and horses, she presents a more dignified, even vulnerable, figure. It was this image that was to be the inspiration for Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem *Boädicea* (1859). The poet had received the image from Thomas Woolner[381] and was inspired to write a poem which captured both the dangerous passion, and the sympathy, of Stothard's Boudica.[382] That poem will be discussed in Chapter Four.

A somewhat similar but altogether original image of Boudica appeared in Robert Bowyer's new edition of David Hume's *History of England* (1793) (see Figure 10). This image was from a painting by the prolific painter John Opie who, like Thomas Stothard, saw the pathetic and romantic appeal of Boudica's story.[383] The painting was rendered into a line engraving by William Sharp. This was another full-length portrait of Boudica, but which provided a closer view than Thomas Stothard's image. Unlike Stothard, and indeed most artists before him, Opie included the pathetic presence of Boudica's two children. Opie showed Boudica (whose spear is still visible in her clenched fist) with her arm wrapped protectively around the sobbing form of one daughter, while the other child looks on with what appears to be admiration for her

[381] It is worth noting that the sculptor Thomas Woolner RA submitted an entry entitled "The Death of Boadicea" to the competition to determine which scenes should adorn the rebuilt Houses of Parliament in the early 1840s. No copy of the model seems to have survived.
[382] C. Ricks (ed), *The Poems of Tennyson* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co Ltd, 1969) 1119.
[383] For Opie's life see R. Simon, "Opie, John (1761–1807)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004) online edn, Oct 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20800, accessed 3 Dec 2012].

mother. Boudica herself is again draped in classical robes, but this time her headgear is a warlike helmet. Despite these accoutrements of battle, Boudica's cascading hair and softened features gives the viewer a distinct impression of a softened feminine figure. There are no Druid seers in this image, only frightened Britons looking toward Boudica in either admiration, or fear, or pity. These two images present a very different picture of Boudica to the somewhat comical one found in Smollett, and the majestic portraits found in the seventeenth-century Heywood, and the even earlier Holinshed. Public tastes in historical culture were changing and Stothard's and Opie's images of Boudica reflected this.[384]

Arguably, this change was also reflected in new published works about Boudica, such as William Cowper's *Boadicea: An Ode* (1782). William Cowper (1731-1800) failed in a career in law, endured multiple episodes of depression, and had even attempted suicide, before he found his voice in verse. Despite difficult beginnings, he came to be known by his prolific body of poetic works and hymns. His popularity in the next century was such that his mother, who had died at the age of 34 when the poet was only six years old, was included in an anthology of the "mothers of great and good men".[385] Cowper, although best known for his pious verses, turned his talents to patriotic musings, amongst other subjects. *Boadicea: An Ode* was included in his first published volume in 1782, but he had written the poem in 1780 during a period of intense personal strain. The poet's cousin and religious mentor, the Reverend Martin Madan, had recently made a public statement of support for polygamous marriage, a

[384] Smiles. *The image of antiquity*, 95.
[385] C.E. Sargeant, *A book for mothers, or biographical sketches of the mothers of great and good men* (London: 1850) 73. Anthologies of the great and good will be discussed in the next chapter.

morally repugnant stance in Cowper's mind. Cowper's own religious awakening had occurred suddenly in 1764, after one of his long periods of mental illness.[386]

Carolyn Williams credited Cowper's poem with providing the "acceptable" image of Boudica inherited by nineteenth-century audiences, which Williams implies Richard Glover and previous writers did not succeed in creating.[387] But far from single-handedly creating the "acceptable" image of Boudica, Cowper's poem was an iteration of the romanticised historical vision which book illustrators and historical writers had previously begun to explore in text and image, and which was itself an inheritance from the historical culture of previous generations. Whatever the context of its creation, the immense popularity of Cowper's poem can hardly be questioned, and it can perhaps be credited with cementing Boudica in children's lessons at school. It was later said that William Cowper's *Boadicea: An Ode* became known to every schoolchild in England.[388] The copyright on William Cowper's poems expired in 1814, which allowed his work to be reproduced at low cost and in vast numbers. According to one historian, Cowper's were among the most widely read poems of the modern era.[389] *Boadicea* was reprinted over and over again in children's books and periodicals.[390]

The poem reads as a prophecy relayed to Boudica through the voice of a Druid priest. It seemed natural enough at this stage for Cowper to include a Druid seer in his poetic narrative, although no historical source ever referred to one. This would appear to

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[386] J. D. Baird, "Cowper, William (1731–1800)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press. Sept 2004. online edn, May 2009. [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6513, accessed 8 Feb 2010]
[387] Williams, "This frantic woman", 32.
[388] When the poem was recited at the St Albans Pageant of 1907, "…a small, clearly defined cheer came from one corner of the audience, which evidently recognised an old friend of its school lessons." *Manchester Guardian*, 16 July 1907.
[389] W. St. Clair, *The reading nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 207.
[390] Macdonald, "Boadicea", 57.

be an instance in which the visual representations, which often included Druids, influenced the writer. Speaking to Boudica as she stands "bleeding from the Roman rods", the Druid foresees the fall of Rome and the birth of a new empire in its place:

> Regions Cæsar never knew
> Thy posterity shall sway,
> Where his eagles never flew,
> None invincible as they.
>
> She, with all a monarch's pride,
> Felt them in her bosom glow;
> Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;
> Dying, hurl'd them at the foe.
>
> Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
> Heav'n awards the vengeance due;
> Empire is on us bestow'd,
> Shame and ruin wait for you.[391]

The patriotic message of Cowper's poem was clear, but the work also marks a newly-made connection between the successes of ancient Rome and the expanding British empire in the context of Boudica's story. As we have seen, Boudica's reputation up to this point had largely been built on an insular patriotism in which she represented the folly of factionalism while simultaneously standing for British gumption in the face of a foreign threat. Cowper's Boudica played a somewhat different role, as a precursor to British success in the eighteenth-century present – the disaster before a much-delayed triumph. It is not at all clear exactly how later writers and audiences understood the connection between Boudica and the wider British empire, but there will be some discussion of this question in Chapter Five.

Perhaps the most telling example of Boudica's entry into a "national" arena as a representative of Britishness came in 1794 with the naming of the HMS *Boadicea*. After

[391] J.D. Baird, C. Ryskamp (eds), *The poems of William Cowper*. Six volumes. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980). Vol I, 431-432.

the latest wars with France, there had been some controversy over the "frenchifying" of new ships of the British navy, many of which were being named for ships captured in previous years. As one correspondent to the *London Advertiser and Morning Chronicler* remarked, "It has, I confess, not a little surprized me to find an amazing superfluity of French names that have of late been given to some of our ships of war, that have been fresh launched from the stocks..."[392] Having scoured the histories and old naval lists for appropriate names, the writer provided a list of alternatives to the offending French ones, even going to far as to rank the names in order of the number of guns each should have. Whether the list was taken seriously by naval authorities or whether by pure coincidence, the royal navy launched a frigate with 38 guns called the HMS *Boadicea* in 1797. There were to be three more HMS Boadiceas in the service. The last, a destroyer finished in 1930, was struck by a torpedo and sunk in Lyme Bay in 1944.[393]

Part VI. Conclusion

Linda Colley has argued that the eighteenth century marked the beginning of the "forging" of British national identity, a concept she linked to the union of Scotland and England in 1707. In Colley's opinion, "patriots", identified with Britain and Britishness, "cannot be understood without reference to both European and world history…"[394] But this does not seem to have been true in Boudica's case, at least not entirely. She was understood as a patriotic defender of British independence, but she also speaks to a more insular form of patriotism, and even national identity. Perhaps the tendency for historians to ignore the prevalence of popular national histories before about 1750 has

[392] *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*. 29 December 1781.
[393] J.J. Colledge., B. Warlow, *Ships of the Royal Navy*. (London: Greenhill Books, 2003) pp. 53-54.
[394] L. Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707-1837* (London: Yale University Press, 1992) 8.

diminished the extent to which we can see more "popular" elements of the past, such as Boudica, as having significance for understandings of national identity in the period. The potential importance of historical culture to a sense of national consciousness during the eighteenth century, and even before, has yet to be fully understood. Colin Kidd has argued that there was no "suitable matter for Britain" in the eighteenth century – even no "common British history," and that "eighteenth-century Britons were to inherit a very qualified sense of British identity which had no powerful ideological source".[395]

Although the exact implications of using the notion of "historical culture" to examine understandings of British national identity requires further research and a degree of refinement that goes beyond what is possible here, I would tentatively conclude that Boudica represented a form of Britishness predicated on the idea of a shared ancient past embodied by the word "Britons". One Scottish writer called her the leader of the "South-Britains", a collective of "fierce, haughty, resenting, and now united Nations", which included some Scots and Picts. Carcactus, king of the Silures, he called "King of the Scots".[396] While such language might not have been in widespread currency, it is still of interest for understanding how some people viewed the ancient past in relation to present identities. I would tentatively diverge from Kidd's assertion that there was no common sense of British history, even before the eighteenth century. If there was a "powerful ideological source" for British identity, it was the shared historical culture that has hitherto been lost on historians of history. The Britishness

[395] C. Kidd, "Protestantism and national identity" in B. Bradshaw and P. Roberts (eds), *British consciousness and identity: the making of Britain, 1533-1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 321-342, p. 321.
[396] P. Abercromby, *The martial atchievments of the Scots nation*, Vol. I. (Edinburgh: Mr. Robert Freebairn, 1711) 20.

evident in this historical culture took into account the ancient Britons, the Saxons, and the Normans, and saw all as part of a long and continuous historical narrative of Britain. Boudica shows this better than many other subjects would by virtue of being a "Briton" in the most ancient sense of the word. In confronting Boudica's story, commentators had also to confront what was meant by "Briton", and which part of the population the ancient British people Boudica represented.[397]

Krishnan Kumar stated recently that the "growing sense of nationhood" evident as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries must be distinguished from the "ideological nationalism" of the nineteenth century, as well as from the "fully-fledged sense of the nation, the feeling shared by rulers and ruled alike of belonging to common political community."[398] But a definition of nationhood predicated solely on a political community shared by "rulers and ruled" alike is akin to an idea of history predicated solely on the organised historical discipline. In the cases of nations, to speak only of the formalised political nation obfuscates the importance of sense of shared culture embodied in representations of a shared national past before the era of mass media; in the case of history, a focus on the formalised discipline ignores the importance of historical culture found in the theatre, popular books, periodicals, and song. To say that there was not, in Kumar's words, a "fully-fledged sense of nationhood" (depending what exactly is meant by "fully-fledged") in the periods before nationalism seems open to question when one can see how important origins, trajectory, prophecy, and history were to people long before the advent of a cohesive political community. By ignoring evidence of a sense of national consciousness before the advent of the political

[397] There will be more discussion in Chapter Five of Boudica's national identity in relation to Wales.
[398] K. Kumar, *The making of English national identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 59.

community, we also ignore the sense of the past that existed before the nineteenth century; and by ignoring the sense of the past evident in historical culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we misunderstand the forms of national consciousness evident outside the political arena.

It is the idea of the "nation" that complicates our understanding of Boudica's "national heroism". As we have seen, literature scholars have been preoccupied with the timing and rationale behind Boudica's eventual attainment of the status of "national heroine" or, in Carolyn Williams's wording, "national institution".[399] I hesitate to use the word "heroine" or even "national institution" to refer even to the late eighteenth-century Boudica, but I can do so more comfortably with certain qualifications. The late eighteenth century is the period in which we can locate a growing mass media and sense of political community, but estimates of a newspaper reading public of 400,000 do not constitute a critical mass of "national" opinion.[400] Even evidence of mass approval in the form of the HMS *Boadicea* cannot constitute "national heroism", although it is significant in its own way as the first instance of Boudica's celebration by an institution, rather than an individual writer or artist. Arguably, Boudica was a "national" heroine in that she represented a character in whom certain ideals of the nation, such as patriotism, could be embodied, or through whom lessons in political cohesion and the need for cooperation between parties could be explicated. Boudica certainly was a consistent, generally positive and patriotic – in a Bolingbrokean, non-partisan sense – presence in British historical culture.

It was Boudica's ubiquity and notoriety in historical culture that made her character so useful in dramatic explorations of ideas of patriotism, and for spreading the

[399] Williams. "Neo-classical Embarrassment", 32.
[400] St. Clair, *Reading nation in the Romantic period*, 478.

patriotism encapsulated in the slogan "Britons Strike Home"; but we must tread carefully when saying Boudica was "useful." Boudica's "patriotic" conduct was not an invention; or, if it was, it was invented by the Greek historian Dio Cassius, who himself was probably influenced by the works of Tacitus. But we can safely say that neither Dio nor Tacitus had any political stake in the Great Britain of the eighteenth century. Boudica's speech, so often repeated in the panoramic national histories described in Chapter Two, would have been a recitation of Dio Cassius's words. Minor additions or subtractions to the text notwithstanding, the speech remained a powerful plea for the Britons to recover and retain their lost liberty, but not one written by a Briton.

Boudica's prominent position in British historical culture would only grow in the years after 1800. It is in that period that we see Boudica's celebrated as an individual in biography, another new development in the growth of historical culture. The years after 1800 can be seen as years of exploration of Boudica's individuality, culminating in her celebration as a hero during the late nineteenth-century age of hero-worship. The following chapter will preface that by exploring Boudica's place in plays and poems by a new body of authors, as well as her appearance in collected biographies of women aimed at the growing audience (much of it female) for historical culture.

Chapter Four

"That brave, maternal, noble, queenly heart": biography and Boudica's womanhood, c. 1800-1850

According to many historians working on the nineteenth century, it is to that period that we can trace two important developments: first, the professionalization of the historical discipline, and second, the rise of an idea of popular history. Without doubt, the writing of narrative history became an activity dominated by institutions – universities, local historical societies, amateur antiquarian groups – during course of the nineteenth century.[401] The foundation of peer-reviewed journals such as the *English Historical Review* (1886), learned societies such as the *Royal Historical Society* (1868), and the increasing presence of historical studies in universities all marked significant shifts towards a professionalised historical discipline with prescribed methods and epistemological boundaries.[402] However, historians of the nineteenth century should be cautious about conflating the development of institutions with the practice of history as an activity distinct from the production of fiction – which is perhaps the most basic definition of historical activity there can be. As we have seen, long before the nineteenth century, the historicised, factual nature of the past distinguished its pursuit from other

[401] Studies which focus on this aspect of historiography include A.D. Culler, *The Victorian mirror of history* (London: Yale University Press, 1985.); P.J. Bowler, *The invention of progress: the Victorians and the past* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989); R.N. Soffer, *Discipline and power: the university, history and the making of an English elite, 1870-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); P. Levine, *The amateur and the professional: antiquarians, historians and archaeologists in Victorian England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) M. Bentley, *Modernizing England's Past: English historiography in the age of modernism, 1870-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[402] R.A. Humphreys, *The Royal Historical Association, 1868-1968* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1969); D.S. Goldstein, "The organizational development of the British historical profession, 1884-1921", *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 55 (1982) 180-193.; D.S. Goldstein, "The origins and early years of the English Historical Review", *English Historical Review* (1986) 6-19.

forms of cultural production, which calls into question the importance of the professional historical discipline to the spread of historical culture more generally.

As for the idea of popular history as having arisen in that period, many scholars have supported this view, either implicitly or explicitly. In his earlier work, Mark Phillips argued that "an imaginative identification with the past" was not evident before the works of "great" nineteenth-century historians such as Macaulay; historians before the nineteenth century were not particularly concerned with evoking the emotions and appealing to the imagination.[403] Roy Strong's assessment was that the early nineteenth century was the first era in which we can discern a commercial interest in the past, evidenced through the production of national histories, historical novels, and history painting, a subject which Strong's work did much to elucidate. In Strong's judgment, the end of the Napoleonic Wars marked the peak of "conscious historicism" in Strong's view.[404] Peter Mandler has asserted the significance of nationalism and the nineteenth century, stating that, "Before the French Revolution, history neither needed nor wanted a popular audience".[405] Mandler rightly points out that "polite" historians in the eighteenth century attempted to distance themselves from the taint of political and religious bias.[406] But we have seen that the "hack" historians of the eighteenth century firmly believed there was a market for their work, and historical writers such as Tobias Smollett and David Hume competed for customers in what Karen O'Brien has called the "history market". But neither should popular – or non-specialist – interest in the past

[403] M. Phillips, "Macaulay, Scott, and the literary challenge to historiography", *Journal of the history of ideas* (1989) 117-133, p. 119.
[404] R. Strong, *And when did you last see your father?*, 32. Strong goes on to say that the popularity of history was part of a "deliberate attempt to create national mythologies strong enough to hold the minds of the masses who now made up and were necessary to the working of the modern state."
[405] P. Mandler, *History and national life* (London: Profile, 2002) 11.
[406] Ibid.

be reduced to the number of published histories. William Shakespeare's history plays present just some of the most far-reaching examples from a much earlier period.

Elsewhere, Mandler has emphasised the importance of the years 1820-1850, arguing that a "popular and national tradition had to be recaptured, rescued from the dust of ages, and then revivified – continued in a modern, democratic idiom, confirming the commitment to progress and the future."[407] Working with a similar time frame in her study of the visual in Victorian historical culture, Mitchell argued that 1830-1870 was the "heyday" of a new historical culture.[408] Mitchell explained the "novelty" of historical culture in the nineteenth century, and cited the growth of new audiences and the explosion of new material to which audiences had access. That new audiences and material emerged in the period is beyond argument, but new audiences and materials had been emerging for centuries. Leslie Howsam's work focused on history books published before about 1850, and argued that the popular idea of the British historical narrative prior to that date amounted to nothing more than a catalogue of kings and queens and a few picturesque anecdotes.[409]

Billie Melman has made a similar claim for the novelty of the historical culture of the nineteenth century. Beginning her study in 1800, Melman argued that "from about 1800 there developed an English popular culture of history."[410] Melman provided an exhaustive list of the elements of historical culture which have been of interest to historians of the period 1800 to the present: books, statues, museums, pageants,

[407] P. Mandler, "'In the olden time': Romantic history and English national identity, 1820-50" in L. Brockliss and D. Eastwood, *A Union of Multiple Identities*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997) 78-92, p. 81.
[408] Mitchell, *Picturing the past*. 5.
[409] Howsam. *Past into print*, 4.
[410] Melman, *The culture of history*, 10.

architecture, heritage sites, film, etc.,[411] some of which I will discuss in the particular case of Boudica in the following two chapters. Again, the methods and media by which historical culture could be circulated were changing and advancing, but this had long been the case. Historical culture mirrored contemporary communication capability, and the capabilities of the nineteenth century were more advanced than those of any previous period.

However, this should not be enough to convince historians that the Victorians were more interested in the past than their predecessors – perhaps only that they had more means of articulating that interest. Elsewhere, Melman has endeavoured to understand why the Victorians were, or seemed to be, so singularly preoccupied with the past and she – as well as others – have pointed to the fact that the nineteenth century was a period of rapid change.[412] Perhaps it is true that the Victorians were in need of an anchor in the past more than previous generations has been. But such claims for the nineteenth century are called into question by the works of David Hume, Tobias Smollett, and, much earlier, Thomas Heywood and William Shakespeare. Copious evidence for the popular resonance of the past can be found in much earlier periods. The explanation that popular enthusiasm for the past developed in the nineteenth century because of uncertainties particular to that present invites some questioning, as it does not explain the interest in the past evident in previous periods.

As for Boudica, she has fallen into a fissure between literary studies of the early modern period and the extensive historiography of what Paul Readman has called "the

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[411] Ibid.
[412] B. Melman, "The power of the past: history and modernity in the Victorian world," in M. Hewitt (ed), *The Victorian World*. pp. 466-483. See also P. Readman. "The place of the past in English culture, c. 1890-1914," *Past and Present*, (2005) 147-199, p. 199, and the discussion in R. Chapman, *The sense of the past in Victorian literature* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), Ch. 1.

place of the past" in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Readman's use of the phrase "the place of the past" is, it seems, a way of implicitly acknowledging the existence of an historical culture outside the history of history, although Readman does not make this explicit, nor does he explore its implications. The previous chapters in this thesis have hopefully gone some way toward opening new avenues of research into an idea of popular history before the nineteenth century. A *longue durée* study of a specific historical figure can allow us to see that conventional chronological boundaries do invite questioning in certain cases.

Part I. Boudica in the nineteenth century

By the end of the eighteenth century we could point to plays, poems, songs, and even to the naming of ships as evidence of interest and investment in the past outside of the development of the discipline. As the previous chapter showed, the patriotic overtones of Boudica's story contributed to her continued presence in British historical culture, and provided a means by which her reputation could travel beyond written histories. This continued to be true after 1800. Typical was this response to a new staging of *Boadicea, or the British Amazon*, almost certainly a reworked version of Richard Glover's play and its accompanying biography from fifty years earlier: "We imagine it is impossible for any Briton to witness the exhibition of *Boadicea*, at Sadler's Wells, without experiencing the most forcible effects of that innate patriotism which reigns in every British breast, and which has tended so long to make Britannia the mistress of the world."[413] The producers invited "the admirers of splendid and classic Pantomime, the Historian, and the Patriot" to view "a striking trait of national biography to be exhibited

[413] *The Observer*, 27 April 1800.

with all the fascination of superb costume."[414] Boudica was alive and well in the historical culture of the early nineteenth century.

This chapter will explore Boudica's place in British historical culture in written works produced before about 1850. The one exception to this chronological framework will be the historical novel *Britain's Greatness Foretold* (1901), which will be discussed at the end of this chapter as a bridge into the next. There are very few studies of Boudica's reputation in the period to which we can point, which seems all the more surprising given the commemorative activity of the latter part of the century, discussed in Chapter Five. Richard Hingley and Christina Unwin have concluded that, "Prior to the late nineteenth century Boadicea was drawn upon from time to time for particular reasons and to make significant points, but she was not a popular figure for much of the period. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries she was transformed in the popular imagination to create a historical ancestry for British national pedigree and imperial greatness; from this time forward, her popularity was assured."[415] According to Virginia Hoselitz, Boudica had taken on an image as a patriotic heroine in the late eighteenth century, but this public esteem for Boudica somehow shifted, and by the nineteenth century Boudica had come to represent the savagery of conquered peoples. This, Hoselitz suggests, changed once again by the beginning of the twentieth century, when Boudica won the hardened hearts of the British public and became a celebrated heroine of a triumphant empire, exemplified by Thomas Thornycroft's statue on

[414] *The Observer*, 13 April 1800.
[415] Hingley and Unwin, *Boudica*, 173.

Westminster Bridge.[416] Both of these summaries lean heavily on the importance of empire to Boudica's popularity, or unpopularity, in the century.

But the aim of this chapter is to show that the ever-expanding culture of history in Britain – whether in newer iterations, such as biography, or perennially popular forms of historical culture, such as drama – continued to be the most important factor in keeping Boudica's story alive in that period. Following on from the expanding number of panoramic national histories, especially those with a more sentimental tone, as well as the increasing popularity of the novel, historical culture took on the role in entertaining and instructing ever-widening audiences in the nineteenth century. In Boudica's case, the works discussed in this chapter take the form a new iteration of historical culture which follows in some respects from the sentimentalised histories discussed in Chapter Two. In particular, the biographical accounts of Boudica that were produced in the first half of the century, and the ways in which such accounts were geared toward a non-specialist, especially female, audience will be the subject of discussion here. Biographical collections were one of the primary ways women's history was conveyed.[417] These were catalogues of women whose were calculated either to encourage or deter emulation depending on the life under discussion. These often bore ponderous moralising messages, especially in the middle part of the century. This was also true of the fictional accounts from that period, and in particular around the time of the Indian Uprising in 1857. I will argue that while contemporary events could be

[416] V. Hoselitz, *Imagining Roman Britain: Victorian responses to a Roman past* (London: Boydell 2007) 124.
[417] For an overview of the genre in the Victorian period see A. Booth, *How to make it as a woman: collective biography of women from Victoria to the present* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2004); R. Maitzen, "'This feminine preserve': historical biographies by Victorian women" *Victorian Studies* (1995) 371-393.; M. Vicinus, "Models for public life: biographies of 'noble women' for girls" in C. Nelson and L. Vallone (eds), *The Girl's Own: cultural histories of the Anglo-American girl, 1830-1915* (London: The University of Georgia Press, 1994) 52-70.

understood or articulated by using the past as a reference point, knowledge of Boudica's story preceded any necessity which emerged from the events of the present. We should understand these works in a larger context of Boudica's place in historical culture, not merely as reflecting popular attitudes to empire.

Rather than deploring the "savagery" of indigenous peoples, the works about Boudica that were written during the Indian Uprising were illustrative of a shift towards an emphasis on imagining and investigating Boudica's internal, emotional life. The new dramatised accounts and the versions of Boudica's story that appeared in biographical collections all explored Boudica's private feelings, especially her relationship with her children, in a way that works had not done before. We have seen that the writers of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century panoramic national histories sometimes used sensationalistic or sentimentalised language when describing Boudica's actions as a way of enlivening their narratives for the benefit of a heterogeneous audience. However, the content of those accounts of Boudica's life rarely strayed beyond the narrative boundaries set down by Tacitus and Dio's writings. Even playwrights, who might have delved into Boudica's imagined emotional depths, had been more concerned with her relationship with her generals, or in the personal intrigues that embellished her background; they did not seem particularly interested in dissecting the emotions of the woman herself.

Thus it is arguable that the most important development for Boudica in the historical culture of the first half of the nineteenth century is that she began to appear in biographical collections, many of them aimed at a female audience, as well as in periodicals intended for young or female readers, and in other forms in which her private life (or elements of it, such as her motherhood) could be explored in some depth.

I do not see this as a development that reflected a widespread change in attitude to female heroes, or to queens, or to women. As I have argued throughout this thesis, Boudica's story can reveal far more than just popular attitudes to women. Because she was such an integral part of the British national narrative, her story is also indicative of popular attitudes to, and engagement with, the past. She reveals much about how and by what means audiences – especially non-specialist ones – understood their own history.

In this way, Boudica's sudden prominence as a mother and widow would seem to point to the conclusion that her femininity was becoming more important during the course of the nineteenth century. This contradicts the assessment made some years ago by Sharon MacDonald, who said that "As the British Empire expanded, early British resistance movements were idealised as prognostic of the day when the Roman Empire would give way to the British… The fact that Boadicea was a woman was scarcely mentioned, and her maternity was forgotten."[418] In fact, Boudica's womanhood, especially her maternity, was explored at great length in biographical collections of the period, and popular interest in the private life of individuals would seem to have spurred this new emphasis. In fact, her womanhood may have made her a more interesting character and helped to maintain her image in an increasingly crowded historical culture in a way that was not possible for the more typical male hero, such as Caractacus.[419]

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, historical culture aimed at women was not a new development of the nineteenth century, but the extent to which biography and life-writing came to the fore certainly was. Mark Phillips has argued that

[418] MacDonald. "Boadicea", 51.
[419] For studies of Caractacus see N. Vance, "Roman heroism and the problems of nineteenth century empire" in G. Cubitt and A. Warren (eds), *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000) p. 155. See also E. Berenson, *Heroes of Empire: five charismatic men and the conquest of Africa* (London: University of California Press, 2011). For a discussion of Caractacus's reputation in Wales, see Chapter Five.

this emphasis on experience over action is an effect of the incursion of the novel, especially the historical novel, on the territory of dignified history, and that this was a characteristic distinct to the nineteenth century.[420] From as early as the mid-eighteenth century, women were being cultivated as a specific audience for history.[421] Biography offered an alternative both to novels and to professionalised forms of history writing, especially to female audiences, for whom it was believed alternatives were uniquely necessary.[422] The peak for biographical collections was in the mid-century, when between ten and twelve collected biographies of women were published each year through the 1850s to the 1870s, often repeating or outright plagiarizing one another.[423]

Interest in Boudica's private life as mother and widow is also evident in poems and plays, some of which will be discussed below. Arguably, didactic history told through plays, biography, and periodicals was the latest iteration of sentimentalised historical culture aimed at an audience whose ability to engage had never been greater, if one can base such an assessment on rising literacy rates.[424] Following on from the first in-depth study of the ancient queen by Charlotte Cowley in her *History of England* (1780), biographical collections were among the first recitations of Boudica's story to be written by women. Billie Melman has argued that female historical writers of the mid-nineteenth century were building "a feminized version of the national memory and

[420] Phillips, "Macaulay and Scott", 117.
[421] N. Zemon Davies, "Gender and genre: women as historical writers, 1400-1820" in P.H. Labalme (ed), *Beyond their sex: learned women of the European past* (London: New York University Press, 1980) 153-182, p. 155. See also D. Looser. *British women writers and the writing of history* (2000).
[422] B. Caine, *Biography and history* (Hounsmill: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 10.
[423] A. Booth, "Illustrious Company: Victoria among other women in Anglo-American role model anthologies" in M. Homans and A. Munich (eds), *Remaking Queen Victoria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 59-78.
[424] Altick cautioned against making firm conclusions on this, as defining "literacy" in the past is difficult to do with precision. General statistics show that by 1851, 54.8% of women were literate, but this is debateable. What is certain is that literacy rates were on the rise. See R.D. Altick, *The English common reader: a social history of the mass reading public, 1800-1900* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998) 169-172.

of history alongside the traditional nationalist and liberal historiography of the mid-nineteenth century."[425] This is perhaps ascribing too coherent a vision to what authors of collective biographies intended, quite apart from identifying a too-recent vintage for "women's history", or at least for women as a subject of historical interest. We saw evidence in the historical culture of the seventeenth century of a feminised version of the British past, even if the authors, like Thomas Heywood, tended to be men.

But women were certainly being encouraged to read history by the eighteenth century, and new forms of historical culture in the nineteenth century reflected the growing demand for historical work for a female audience. That these works emphasised the femininity of their subject is not surprising. In the sections which follow, I will discuss some of the works intended for this female audience, including plays, poems, and biographical accounts which retold the story of Boudica. I will show how all of these explored Boudica's inner life and emotional struggles, especially with her children. I argue that these works constitute a new iteration of the popularity of the past, in which Boudica's appearances in historical culture were characterised by emotional intensity, even melodrama, and bore a distinctly moralistic tone.

Part II. *The Patriot Queen* (1808)

Before moving on to the accounts of Boudica in collected biographies, I will focus on the first play to be written about Boudica in the nineteenth century. It was written by Thomas Rhodes and entitled *The Patriot Queen, or female heroism, a tragedy* (1808). The play was probably never performed before a large audience, and certainly not in any of the famous London playhouses. But despite being a relatively unknown piece, it

[425] B. Melman, "Gender, history, and memory: the invention of women's past in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" *History and Memory* (1993) 5-42, p. 8.

is worthy of note here because Rhodes's work highlights some themes that were to become key to the moral lessons which could be gleaned from Boudica's story in the period; namely her sex and her religion. Little is known about Thomas Rhodes, only that he was a write active between 1808 and 1824.[426] *The Patriot Queen* was dedicated to the 2nd Earl Spencer, George John Spencer (1758-1834), who had many Whig and literary connections, in addition to being a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.[427] Rhodes's dedicatory preface made an implicit reference to Richard Glover's *Boadicia* play of 1753. Like Glover, Rhodes made clear that his play was an example of patriotic resistance to the established rules of drama and thus a product of his national pride. The English, Rhodes noted, are reverent to authority, but do not submit easily to arbitrary dogmas. "We love to be freed from constraint, and to think for ourselves; - a glorious characteristic!"[428]

The author's first pronouncement on Boudica as an individual is a comment on her notoriety. "The character of Boadicea is well known: it was her heroic virtue, and patriotic, undaunted spirit, that occasioned her to make so conspicuous a figure in the history of our country."[429] By this we can conclude that Rhodes believed his subject required little or no introduction; he knew he was travelling on well-trodden ground, but this did not deter him. However, the expanse of Boudica's fame was not in proportion to the degree of detail known about her life or the lives of her daughters. That, Rhodes noted, was what dramatists could provide for an audience desperate for contextual background and embellishment. But even as it added colour to a factual narrative,

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[426] J. Shattock (ed), *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) Vol. 4, col. 426.
[427] G. Crompton, "Rhodes, Thomas (1789–1868)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/49490, accessed 23 Nov 2012]
[428] T. Rhodes, *The patriot queen; or female heroism* (Coventry: 1808) Dedication, v.
[429] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, iv.

drama, Rhodes noted, should not be free from elaboration: "A Drama, taken from history, ought not certainly to deviate from facts as recorded by Historians; it is, however, allowed to be embellished with such incidents as, although not strictly true, are nevertheless highly probable: without those indulgences, indeed, an historical Play would be a dry, uninteresting narrative; an amplification, or an abbreviation of history, the language of which might be thought less pleasing and natural, and less calculated to convey instruction."[430] This statement was revealing of Rhodes's understanding of "fact" and "elaboration". Facts were the skeletal structure of Boudica's story, but embellishment was the flesh, and even if the skeleton was beyond alternation, the flesh demanded it.

Crucially, apart from being an embellishment of the known facts, Rhodes saw his drama as a means of conveying moral instruction. Rhodes's Boudica and her compatriots were newly immersed in a world of religious and moral struggle in which the ancient rites of Druidism, with all the pagan savagery, were pitted against the civilising influence of Christianity in an explicit way. Rhodes made much of his Boadicea character's eventual rejection of the Druidic practice of human sacrifice. After much resistance, Rhodes's Boadicea released the Roman mother whose life she had intended to sacrifice, to the great relief and excitement of her general, Cenulph, who is under the sway of nascent Christianity. The general praises her: "O surely, Royal Madam, you have conquer'd/Before the fight's begun; you've overcome/Our base internal foes."[431] Rhodes attributed this single, perhaps most important, victory to Boudica: the victory of Christian sentiment over pagan blood rites. This tension between a pagan Boudica and a member of her entourage newly indoctrinated into the

[430] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, v.
[431] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, 49.

Christian teaching would become a familiar trope in later fictionalised accounts of her story, some of which will be discussed later in this chapter.

This new focus on Druidism is an interesting twist in Boudica's story as it developed in the nineteenth century. Her religion had rarely been the subject of comment before, although we have seen that the Druid religion played some part in debates about the origins of British liberty during the eighteenth century, as discussed in Chapter Two, and that Druids often formed part of Boudica entourage in artists' imagining of ancient Britain. William Cowper had also privileged the role of the Druids as prophets of victory in his famous poem. But previous textual commentary on Boudica and the Druids did not carry the same tone of judgment as Rhodes's work. Rhodes was unequivocal in his condemnation of Boudica's religion: "It is true that after they [the Britons] had been so inhumanely injured, they appear to have been wholly actuated by revenge; but let it be remembered they were not Christians, and that the religion of the Druids very much encouraged the baleful passions."[432]

Female Heroism had powerful moral messages for the conduct of women as private individuals which had not been evident in plays about Boudica prior to this one. While Rhodes mentioned the importance of patriotism and liberty in his preface, and of course his use of "patriot queen" may have been a reference to Bolingbroke, he does not explain what is meant by the term, nor did the content of his play make that any clearer. There is a comparison to be made here with Richard Glover's *Boadicia* (1753), which had also carried a patriotic message. But the latter had been a clear warning against the danger of faction in an age when partisan feeling was running high. As mentioned in Chapter Three, it is arguable that Boadicia's femininity was incidental to that message,

[432] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, iv.

and the character behaved for all intents and purposes like a leader, albeit not a very good one. Boadicia's sister, Venutia, was the more sympathetic female character, while Boadicia was held up for judgment as a general, not as a woman.

In Rhodes's work, Boudica's identity as a woman and a queen is paramount to the story. In fact, her femininity and her queenly duty to fight is a source of internal struggle for the character of Boadicea. She states:

> Women are best at home; performing well
> Domestic duties; acting well the parts
> Of duteous daughters, faithful virtuous wives,
> And fond, and tender mothers; but if once
> A sov'reigns pow'r is vested in a woman,
> Then let her govern as becomes a queen;
> Let her be steadfast, patriotic, brave,
> Skilful in politics, and even in war![433]

This focus on the feminine identities of mother and queen to the exclusion of other extrinsic issues was the newest development in Boudica's posthumous story. Rhodes also made Boudica's female characteristics a more significant part of his work and his Boadicea referred to her own femininity on more than one occasion in pathetic tones:

> Spare me, my friends: This weakness is, I know,
> At this momentous time, without excuse:
> But pardon me; I am an injur'd woman,
> And injur'd women will sometimes give way
> To unbecoming grief.[434]

Rhodes's work was one of the first to emphasize Boudica's femininity as a significant aspect of her individual character. As we have seen, Boudica's femininity did not play as great a role in previous centuries as one might assume. Even if it rarely went unacknowledged, it was equally rare that Boudica's womanhood should be the subject of condemnation in itself, nor was her own conduct used to condemn women as

[433] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, 18.
[434] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, 57.

a group. Crucially, even in the "sentimental" histories discussed in Chapter Two, Boudica's story was never used deter female readers from particular conduct – that is, her story was not a didactic one until the nineteenth century. Richard Glover's play, which did contain some commentary on Boudica's womanhood, still had a more overt patriotic message. But in the nineteenth century, as the female constituency of audiences grew, the construction of Boudica as an individual came to reflect the didactic nature of historical writing more explicitly than it had done in previous years.

This new development is reflected in the fact that Rhodes's play had a moral message aimed at women as separate membership of his audience. Rhodes's Boudica character declared to her surviving daughter: "If it be possible, live thou retir'd;/Pray to the Gods, possess a quiet spirit./Meddle not thou with government or party."[435] Rhodes's own commentary in the epilogues echoed his Boadicea's dying pronouncement. This insistence on the retiring life for Rhodes's audience, or the imagined female constituent of it, was an opinion shared by prominent thinkers on female education in the period such as Hannah More.[436] Women, Rhodes wrote, are to be esteemed by all, and are capable of resisting tyranny in their own right. However, it is the male duty to protect them from having to use this ability, and men must ensure that women and girls remain safe at home, where they can "give sweet nightly love," in the author's words. Rhodes's didactic message was aimed at two audiences, which he seems to have divided: a male one and a female one, and he intended that each take instruction in line with what he saw as their opposite roles. This was a development in

[435] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, 68.
[436] See for example H. More, "On the religious and moral use of history and geography" in *Strictures on the modern system of female education, with a view of the principles and conduct among women of rank and fortune* (London: T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1799) 2 volumes. Vol I, pp. 196-220.

British historical culture with beginnings in the eighteenth century, and Boudica's story soon began to reflect it.[437]

Part III. "Pleasant, feminine, readable": Boudica and the history of women

We have already seen how in 1640 Thomas Heywood was the first author to write Boudica into a narrative of female glory. Other examples of Boudica's place in a specifically female narrative include one from 1745, in which she was part of an appeal to history for proof that the female sex was the superior one. The unnamed author of *Beauty's Triumph* stated that, "We need not go out of England to seek heroines, while we have annals to preserve their illustrious names... let it suffice to name a Boadicea, who made the most glorious stand against the Romans in defence of her country, which that great empire was ever a witness to. And if her endeavours did not meet with the success of an Alexander, a Cesar, or a Charles of Sweden in his fortunate days; her courage and conduct were such as render'd her worthy to be consider'd equal, if not superior to them all, in bravery and wisdom; not to mention the nicer justice of her intentions."[438]

One work that was and is important to Boudica's story has already been mentioned in the previous chapter. This was Charlotte Cowley's *Ladies history of England…calculated for the use of the ladies of Great Britain and Ireland, and likewise adapted to general use, entertainment, and instruction* (1780), an historical work written by a woman and, as the title makes clear, intended for a female audience. While some writers (a few of whom will be discussed below) wrote histories of women from

[437] D.R. Woolf, "A feminine past? Gender, genre, and historical knowledge in England, 1500-1800" *American Historical Review* (1997) 645-679.
[438] *Beauty's triumph or the superiority of the Fair Sex invincibly proved* (London: J. Robinson, 1745) 54.

around the world and without regard for chronology, Cowley's history had a national focus first and foremost, and it followed the usual chronology for histories of England, granting the same attention to male actors as to female. In fact, there is little to distinguish Cowley's *Ladies History* from any other history of England which did not claim to be for or about women.[439] But Cowley did pay special attention to Boudica as an historical actor. Writers in the eighteenth century rarely cited[440] Edmund Bolton's work when relating Boudica's story, but Cowley did, referring to him as "an old English author."[441] Cowley's treatment of the existing literature about Boudica stands out as particularly thorough. Arguably, Cowley's history marked the first time since Edmund Bolton published *Nero Caesar* in 1624 that Boudica was the subject of research in her own right.

Cowley's focus on Boudica is evidence both of Boudica's individuality and of women's growing interest in historical matters. Unlike Cowley's learned work, women's histories, including collected biography, were often judged not on the merit of the scholarship involved in their production, but rather on the value of the moral instruction conveyed.[442] These were, according to twentieth-century historians, an assertion of women's presence in the historical narrative, as well as a means of making visible the "woman's sphere".[443]

But as the above discussion demonstrates, histories by women or intended for a female audience were not new, although the production of such histories steadily

[439] Looser, *Women writers and the writing of history*, 4.
[440] I have only found one reference to Bolton, in *The Rational Amusement*, 342.
[441] C. Cowley, *Ladies history of England* (London: S. Bladon, 1780) 13.
[442] M.E. Burstein, "From good looks to good thoughts: popular women's history and the invention of modernity, ca. 1830-1870", *Modern Philology* (1999) 46-75, p. 50.
[443] Maitzen, "This feminine preserve", 372.

increased in the years after 1800.[444] In a manner similar to the burgeoning numbers of histories written in the eighteenth century, these histories of women cannot all be assumed to contain an account of Boudica. Many of them began their narrative of events after the Conquest, or included accounts of the lives of only literary women, or Christian women, etc. Used in this way, the appellation "history of women" could encompass highly specialised histories of a tiny category of women.

Amongst these histories of women we might also count female biography. In the case of feminine biography, the purview of such work tended to be the inner life of the subject; the subject, more often than not, had led a life of relative inaction. This did not deter biographers of women who published a growing number of works in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[445] It was no longer a prerequisite that a life be filled with intrigue and high political derring-do to be of interest the audiences. But, as Rhodes noted in 1808, little was known about the detail of Boudica's life, even if her name and actions were notorious. Thus biographers had a difficult time reconciling Boudica as a woman of public action whose private life had left no trace, and from which little could be learned by the average woman. Of the dozens of biographical collections published during the nineteenth century, Boudica only appeared in five of them.[446] This relatively low number cannot be explained fully by the assertion that

[444]Burstein tells us that there were 300 "histories of women" published in the nineteenth century. This total probably includes both British and American histories, although Burstein is unclear on this point. Burstein, "From good looks to good thoughts", 48. See also M.E. Burstein, "Unstoried in history: early histories of women (1652-1902) in the Huntington Library collections", *The Huntington Library Quarterly* (2001) 469-500.

[445] Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, 134. For debates about the public and private sphere in gender history see A. Vickery, 'Golden age to separate spheres? A review of the categories and chronology of English women's history', *The Historical Journal* (1993) 383-414; J. Rendall. "Women and the public sphere" in L. Davidoff, K. McClelland, E. Varikas (eds), *Gender and history: retrospect and prospect* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

[446] Alison Booth at the University of Virginia has created an indispensible online resource for surveying women's collected biography, mostly between 1830 and 1950. <http://womensbios.lib.virginia.edu/>

authors "disapproved" of Boudica. Some may have done, but even authors who expressed misgivings about Boudica's conduct continued to publish accounts of her deeds, perhaps as cautionary tales. Arguably it was the lack of known detail that discouraged biographers from writing extensively about Boudica.

The first author to include Boudica in a nineteenth-century work of collected biography was Mary Hays in 1803. Hays was a woman of letters, and a friend to Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, and their circle of radical and Dissenting friends. Hays, like Wollstonecraft, was an autodidact with a keen interest in female education.[447] She published her six-volume collection of *Female Biography* in 1803, "in the cause, and for the benefit, of my own sex." She went on to explain that, "…my book is intended for women, and not for scholars; that my design was not to surprise by fiction, or to astonish by profound research, but to collect and concentrate, in one interesting point of view, these engaging pictures, instructive narratives, and striking circumstances, that may answer a better purpose than the gratification of vain curiosity."[448] Hays's recitation of the Boudica story begins with an implicit charge that Boudica's suffering was due to her husband's "imprudent testament" that half of his kingdom should be granted to the Roman emperor. In all likelihood, this was a veiled commentary on marriage that revealed Hays's own views of matrimonial inequity. Hays believed that the inequalities inherent in marriage exposed widows and children to the dangers of poverty, and worse, at the death of their protector. The rest of the story is an overtly emotive version of the conventional Boudica narrative, centred solely on the "heroic queen" and her actions. Hays did not make reference to Paulinus's movements

[447] G.L. Walker, *Mary Hays (1759-1843): The growth of a woman's mind* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).
[448] M. Hays, *Female biography; or memoirs of illustrious and celebrated women, of all ages and countries* (London: R. Phillips, 1803) Six volumes. Vol. I, p. 4.

on the Isle of Mona immediately prior to the final battle between the Romans and Britons, an omission which showed the author had relatively little interest in the wider historical context of the events being related. Instead the focus was on Boudica's conduct, the Britons' reaction to their queen's call to arms, and the manner in which "Private and individual injury swelled the tide of public hatred."[449] This was echoed by Thomas Rhodes five years later, although with a very different overall message that people must be wary of female rule: "Tis done, my friends! My tears are all dry'd up:/Let private woe give way to public vengeance," Rhodes has his Boudica character declare.[450] Here he conflates Boudica's feminine weakness with her desire for revenge.

Hays's biography and Rhodes's play are both evidence of a clear shift in the nature and purpose of historical works which treated individual lives. Both were intended for non-specialist audiences made up of both sexes or, in Hays's case, probably one of which the majority were female. That heterogeneous audiences engaged with historical culture is not new to this period, but that Boudica began to feature in didactic, instructive work aimed specifically at a non-academic and non-political audience does present something of a shift.

Boudica's womanhood was also decisive in this period because it qualified her for what Elizabeth Langland has called the "comparative project" of British queens which emerged in popular literature, and especially in collected biographies of queens during the reign of Victoria.[451] (Boudica's specific relationship to Queen Victoria in the public imagination will be the subject of analysis in the next chapter.) Boudica had long been known by the title of "queen", sometimes of her tribe, the Iceni, and occasionally

[449] Hays, *Female biography*, vol. II, p. 5.
[450] Rhodes, *Patriot queen*, 57.
[451] E. Langland, "Victoria in the developing narrative of Englishness",'in M. Homans and A. Munich (eds), *Remaking Queen Victoria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 28.

of the whole of Britain. She had been linked to other queens in the past, although her affinity to Queen Elizabeth has been given more attention that the evidence suggests it should. There are very few references to a link between Queen Anne and Boudica. A poem written in honour of Anne's birthday in 1709 included the telling line: "And Boadicea's story/By the Admiring World so much renown'd/Can't parallel our Anna's glory."[452]

But it was not only reigning queens with whom Boudica could be associated. For example, the London printmaker John Fairburn published a print in 1820 showing Queen Caroline as "Queen Boadicea overthrowing her enemies" (see Figure 11). The print depicted Queen Caroline in full regal dress standing atop a chariot pulled by two white horses. The scythes on her chariot wheels bear the inscription "Justice", and the queen is supported by a crowd whose leader is shouting, "Come on my lads…Justice, the Queen, and Old England forever!"[453] It is significant that the reference to Caroline as "Boadicea" needs no explanation beyond the inclusion of a scythe-wheeled chariot, suggesting that the viewers of this print would have linked the injustices done to Queen Caroline with those suffered by the queen of "Old England" without further prompting. This again demonstrates both Boudica's reputation at this stage and her identity as a part of a line of British queens.

But despite this occasional acknowledgment of Boudica's queenship, she did not figure very prominently in the comparative project because writers who were motivated by the didactic potential of historical lives were confronted with moral dilemmas that were unknown to artists. Visual imagery, which played such a crucial role in conveying

[452] J. S. Cousser, *A Sereneta to be represented on the Birth-day of the Most Serene Anne*. (Dublin: 1709)
[453] "Boadicea, Queen of Britain overthrowing her enemies…"(1820) British Museum Satires. 1983, 0305.38.

the idea of the individual Boudica, was also an effective means of conveying a portrait of the ancient queen which made imaginative links with contemporary queens, but which avoided the need to explain away Boudica's questionable conduct. Authors of collected biographies of queens did not have such an easy escape route from the demands of narrative. The *Lives of the Queens of England Before the Conquest* (1854) by Mrs. Matthew Hall, is one example of Boudica's appearance in a uniquely detailed biographical account in a collected biographical work featuring queens. The version of the Boudica story told in *Lives of the Queens* was so heavily embellished as to have lost almost all resemblance to the conventional portrayal of Boudica in text, except in that most crucial of particulars: Boudica's eventual descent into savagery. However, the contemporary comment surrounding Hall's account pointed to a degree of discomfort with such embellishment in a work which aspired to be "historical". Once again, Boudica's example shows an overlap between genres with somewhat different aims. The authenticity of history did not fit well with the morality of biography.

Mrs. Matthew Hall stated in her preface, "The family details of Boadicea's history, of whom much has been written, have never before appeared in connection with her life, and without the knowledge of these it is impossible fairly to appreciate the exciting details of her sufferings as a woman, wife, and mother – in the delineation of *her* character, no fiction can arrive at the all-powerful force of simple truth."[454] But there was no truth in Hall's new assertions, and the idea that Boudica's family history had long been known but never acknowledged was an unsupportable statement. A not-altogether unsympathetic reviewer in *The Spectator* noted that, "As might be expected, Mrs. Hall is more at home in the mild and domestic than the heroic. The greatest of the

[454] Mrs. M. Hall, *The queens before the Conquest* (London: 1854) Two volumes.

British Queens, Boadicea, is not handled with the force and breadth which such a heroine required."[455] Indeed, despite the appellation Hall granted to her, "Boadicea the Warlike", Hall managed to create a Boudica story shorn of its most straightforwardly "heroic" elements, as well as embellished with fictions. Hall created a whole familial and domestic world for Boudica. She named Caractacus as Boudica's brother, and provided details of her upbringing and education as a British maiden. Hall claimed that Boudica was a princess of the Picts of Scotland, and that the ancient queen's childhood home had been located in present-day Edinburgh, at the top of Arthur's Seat.[456] There, according to Hall, Boudica and her companions were given some training in the art of war, but were more often employed in needlework and, most important for posterity, basket-weaving. British baskets, Hall asserted, were the envy of the Roman world.

Hall imagined that Boudica grew up in a palatial, cosseted environment like a Tudor-era noblewoman. The author went on to describe the young princess's subsequent marriage to the king of the Iceni – an addition to the story which transplanted Boudica to the more traditional location of Norfolk. But then the story took a dramatic, highly fictionalised, turn. After her marriage, Boudica's husband, called Arviragus by Hall, betrayed his new wife and switched his allegiance to the Roman side. A war then ensued between Boudica's vengeful, protective "brother" Caractacus and his estranged brother-in-law, who had gained the backing of the Romans. In Hall's account, Boudica's pitiful plight – her husband had not only betrayed his country, but had also run off with a Roman princess – was a *cause célèbre* for the Britons, from Scotland to England. Mrs. Hall may have had in mind the scandalous Queen Caroline affair of 1821, during which public opinion was so bitterly divided between supporters

[455] *The Spectator*, 23 September 1854.
[456] Hall, *Queens before the conquest*, 46.

of the king and those of the queen. However, unlike in the case of Caroline and George IV, Boudica and Arviragus were able to reconcile after Arviragus abandoned his Roman life and, according to Hall, took the name of Prasutagus, which all previous writers agreed had been Boudica's husband's name all along. From this point the narrative became more familiar, but Hall still embellished it with small ameliorative details that gave the reader the impression of an advanced society in which the role of the queen was to address issues of moral corruption, which had bred amongst the Britons as a result of the many vices imported by the Romans. Among these was the public theatre, used by the Romans to spread messages injurious to British independence. Hall claimed that Boudica not only abhorred such vices, she even wrote epistles against them which were then circulated amongst neighbouring tribes.

But this fanciful portrait could not withstand the confirmed historical records, which Hall had either ignored or "improved upon", and she was forced to relate the slaughter of the Roman colonists which Boudica herself ordered. "It is necessary to the veracity of history to add, awful as the picture is to contemplate, that the mandates of carnage were given by the stern Queen herself." Even as Hall felt free to embellish upon those points for which there was no evidence, as an historical account, Hall's heavily fictionalised version of the story had to reckon with the Boudica story as told in the classical sources. This meant addressing Boudica's savagery, and the ultimate destruction and death of the characters whose sophistication and refinement Hall's narrative had done so much to establish in the reader's mind. In the author's opinion, it was the pernicious influence of wrong religion that led to such barbarism: "…nor can

the horrors of Paganism appear in darker colours, than the picture of this revenge."[457] Boudica's part in the narrative ended with her suicide, but Hall went on to relate a fictional account of the lives of the queen's two daughters. She said that one married a Roman general, in fact her rapist, and the other took the name Princess Boadicea and continued to campaign against the Roman occupiers until her death.

Hall made claims for her work as a rigorous history, but her references are imprecise at best. As the *Spectator* reviewer put it, "…a person who took the trouble to bring together all such phrases as 'we may imagine,' 'it may be presumed,' 'there is reason to think,' 'although no particulars have reached us,' and so forth, would have a goodly collection of hypothetical terms."[458] But Hall's work shows what it was that biographers wanted from the warlike figure of Boudica. By creating a private family life and a past filled with domestic trials through which the ancient queen could valiantly suffer, Hall's work demonstrates that Boudica's story could be fitted into these collected biographies, although with some difficulty. Even the life of a warrior queen, tinged as it was by savagery, could be adapted to teach moral lessons to girls and women. Hall's Boudica suffered in dignified silence when her husband abandoned her; she acted as a support to her father and brothers, stirred the hearts of her followers, and campaigned for the moral advancement of her people.

As an aspirant writer of an historical work, Hall had at some points to confine herself to the skeletal outline of the Boudica story which had been cemented by Tacitus, Dio, and those who came after them, and which was by then so familiar. The elements of betrayal, carnage, and suicide evident in the Boudica story were impossible to gloss over when they influenced the very course of national history. This, I argue, is what

[457] Hall, *Queens before the Conquest*, 63.
[458] *The Spectator*, 23 September 1854.

separated Boudica from other exemplary female figures. While the details of personal, private lives were often unverifiable and therefore open to imaginative interpretation, Boudica's story, even with personal detail added in, was both well-known and integrated into the national narrative. Her story did not submit easily to wholesale rewriting.

In the same year as Mrs. Matthew Hall published her account of Boudica, we find another from Mrs. Octavius Freire Owen in *Heroines of History* (1854). Hall had made some mention of paganism's evil consequences for Boudica and her people, but Owen makes it a much larger part of her account. Above all, it was Boudica's suicide that offended Owen: "Contempt for death, and the reception of it with an exaggerated welcome, formed the grand basis of barbarian virtue; and the woman who fell by her own hand, was formerly an object of applause and example. Now the consolatory doctrine of Christianity teaches us a nobler lesson. The great principle of worldly probation, is the endurance of afflictions, which are 'but for a moment' by the exercise of a faith, constant and inviolate, in the unseen… He who is so much a coward, as to refuse to bow before the storms of adversity, will, upon moderate reflection, find in himself scarcely sufficient boldness to brave the anger at an offended Judge, when ushered…unsummoned, into the presence of his Maker."[459]

However, this pronouncement against Boudica's religion and the conduct it inspired could not be read as straightforward condemnation on Owen's part. In fact, it was Boudica's portrait that adorned the frontispiece of the of Owen's volume (see Figure 12). It was an original image attributed to "Gilbert", although no other information about the image's creator was evident. The image followed what had

[459] Mrs. O.F. Owen, *The heroines of history* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1854).

become a pattern for images of Boudica, with the queen standing before an assembled crowd either of troops, or of a mixture of soldiers and Druid priests, sometimes with her daughters visible in the background. In this image, Boudica appeared tall and fearsome, with one arm raised above her, and a spear gripped in the other. She was shown commanding the attention of a large gathering of bearded men who seem to be clamouring eagerly around her. The most interesting addition to this image was the presence of the demure, wistful girl, one of Boudica's daughters, seated at the edge of the noisy scene. Her eyes are shown cast down in a swooning display of shame, modesty, or both – an understated testimony to the cruel fate which the audience understood had befallen the blameless girl. The violated beauty of the daughter appeared in stark contrast to the anger on the face of her mother and the violent energy of the crowd of men. On the whole, it is an emotional image, not unlike those which were being produced for histories written at the close of the eighteenth century discussed in the previous chapter. As had long been the case, Boudica's savagery did little to diminish the perception that her rage had been in some measure justifiable, nor did it negate her patriotism and bravery in the face of a superior hostile force. Her daughters, especially when portrayed in so sympathetic a light as Owen's illustrator has them, could only arouse pity for the young women and their mother, and perhaps rendered their bloody acts of vengeance more sympathetic.

Aside from her appearance in collected biography, accounts of Boudica's story also began to appear in new magazines and periodicals aimed at young and female audiences, a trend that was to continue throughout the century.[460] These stories are bit

[460] There are numerous examples one could point to but see *The London Literary Pioneer*. 1 July 1848; *The Children's Treasury*, 1 March 1868; *The Children's Treasury*, 15 July 1876. A lengthy fictionalised account accompanied by an illustration, unique in featuring Boudica and her daughters taking an active

parts in the larger production of Boudica's image in the nineteenth century, but they are nonetheless important as a cumulative body of material which circulated the idea of Boudica and her daughters, and which demonstrates the ease with which the past could be accessed by readers. Boudica's story was often told as part of a reduction of the full narrative of British or English history for young people. Her life had been digested for *La Belle Assemblée; or, Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine* as part of a review of Meyrick's study of ancient costume (1815) in which Boudica featured as the example of how the ancients might have adorned themselves, and which the reviewer thought particularly entertaining and appropriate to the magazine's audience. The commentator also noted that the prevalence of warrior women was "common to every rude age," and illustrated the remark by pointing to "our celebrated Voadicea, or Boadicea".[461] The imagined costume of the ancient warrior queen was also a point of interest to the readers of the *Court Magazine and Monthly Critic* in January 1838. In a manner similar to Mrs. Hall's recitation of the Boudica story, such articles placed Boudica in the field of female activity, in this instance an interest in costume. The *Ladies' Treasury* serialised "An Hour with Mamma" in which readers were taught the history of Britain, including Boudica's story, through an imagined dialogue between a grandmother, her daughter, and her daughter's children. One child professes admiration for the ancient hero Caractacus, whom she sees an example of the "true sublime." Her mother agrees but points out that, "The queenly form of Boadicea 'bleeding from the Roman rods,' as the poet Cowper says, is, in its way, as touching and as fine." But the mother ushers her children's narrative forward: "I want to get on to the only really great and truly

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part in battle (Boudica is show wielding an axe) was printed in *Every Week*, 28 January 1880. She also featured in the *Girls Own Paper*, *Boys of England*, and the *English Illustrated Magazine*.

[461] *La Belle Assemblée; or, Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine*, 1 December 1823.

important event in the history of this – or indeed, of any other – country. I mean the introduction of Christianity."[462]

Indeed, tarrying too much on Boudica's story was not to be encouraged. A commentator in *The Lady's Newspaper* used Boudica as an example of an unpalatably fierce female heroine: "Somehow or other we never seem able thoroughly to swallow the idea of a fighting woman. It sticks in our throats like the husk of a horse chestnut. Boadicea and Joan of Arc are all very well as figures in the dim background of history, but we could scarcely tolerate them nearer our own times."[463] We have seen that as part of a transnational comparative project of queenship, Boudica did not fare well. Her conduct was hardly exemplary, and biographers did not think it prudent to advocate violence or suicide, especially in a young and female audience. But because these authors aspired to historical accuracy, there was not much that could be done to make Boudica's story fit the formula of didactic, improving biography.

Part IV. Boudica and the present: the case of the Indian Mutiny and empire

As we have seen in the works by Owen and Hall, and in the version of Boudica's story retold in periodicals, Boudica's identity as an ancient "savage" could be challenging for authors who sought to portray her as an exemplar for other women (crucially, we should reiterate that this did not deter some authors), or as a part of a narrative of national history aimed at impressionable children. But writers of fiction also began to explore Boudica's femininity and paganism in a more in-depth way. The works discussed in this section are noteworthy for having overt messages that encouraged female decency and

[462] *The Ladies' Treasury*,1 January 1859.
[463] *The Lady's Newspaper*, 15 April 1863.

Christian piety. They were also written during a very short period, between 1857 and 1859. This was, of course, the period of the uprising in India. For instance, Tennyson's poem discussed below has been seen as evidence that Boudica's rebellion was linked in the popular imagination to the events in India.[464] There is no direct evidence for this beyond the coincidence of dates, but the fact that themes of religion and sex come to the fore in works of this period must be considered as, at least to some degree, as having been a reaction to events in India, and perhaps to the activities of Lakshmi Bai, or the Rani of Jhansi.[465] This female leader commanded a force against the British troops in India during the uprisings in 1857, and at least one contemporary commentator made the explicit the connection between the British warrior queen and the Rani, the "Boadicea of the Deccan."[466] The comparison with Boudica may have been seen as especially appropriate, as the Rani was thought to have eventually committed suicide rather than be taken alive, although this was disputed. Another Indian princess, the Bagum of Bopaul, was also the subject of comparison with Boudica: "The Bagum behaved nobly during the Mutiny, and, like Boadicea, harangued her troops, although, unlike the cruel Ranee of Jhansee, on the other side, she did not lead them into the field."[467] The commentator in this instance drew a three-way comparison between the female rulers, allowing two to be heroic, while the Rani was portrayed as cruel.

In the works discussed below, Boudica could act as a historical referent for an event in the present, representing an uncivilised, even barbaric people, who rebel

[464] Hingley and Unwin, *Boudica*, 156.
[465] For the life and reputation of the Rani of Jhansi see J. Lebra-Chapman, *The Rani of Jhansi: a study in female heroism in India* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986).
[466] *The Guardian*, 14 February 1859.
[467] *The Manchester Guardian*, 28 December 1875.

against the superior forces of an imperialist army.[468] We begin first with the play by Sir Coutts Lindsay, entitled "Boadicea: A Tragedy", printed privately in 1857.[469] Sir Coutts Lindsay (1824-1913) was the founder of the Grosvenor Gallery and an enthusiastic patron of the arts.[470] Lindsay's version of Boudica's story counts among the most tragic portrayals of Boudica, and much of that tragedy stems from her femininity, specifically her motherhood. Lindsay painted a portrait of an ambitious, even avaricious woman who used marriage to attain her status. However, Lindsay also portrayed Boudica as a protective mother whose fraught position causes her intense emotional confusion. Lindsay's portrayed his Boadicea as driven by an uncontrollable desire for vengeance. This causes her to reject her children, both of whom are in favour of making peace with the Romans. After murdering her daughter's lover and losing her final battle with the Romans, Lindsay's Boadicea jumps off a cliff and drowns. In this case, the utter defeat of the British army was mirrored by the complete destruction of Boadicea's family. Like Rhodes's play some years previous, Lindsay's play might serve as a warning against female leadership in battle, as well as being an exploration of the themes of motherhood, duty, queenship, and civilization.

Lindsay demonstrates the importance of motherhood through a dialogue between Boadicea and her male attendants. The queen makes a particularly impassioned speech to one of them when it becomes clear that her daughters were either murdered or kidnapped by the Romans:

Thou hast no daughters – never hadst a child

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[468] For British ideas of the Roman Empire see N. Vance, *The Victorians and ancient Rome* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1997). See also D. Bell. "From ancient to modern in Victorian imperial thought" *The Historical Journal* (2006) 735-759.
[469] C. Lindsay, "Boadicea: a tragedy" (London: 1857)
[470] New York Times Obituary. 9 May 1913. [http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?_r=1&res=9B0CE7D7173FE633A2575AC0A9639C946296D6CF]

> Which sprang from forth the womb,-'twas not for thee
> To feel thy heart beat when the callow thing
> Sought from the breast its food; thou hast not felt
> The dear delight to yield it nourishment;
> The first attempts at infant prattle made
> No music to thee- yet the chants of heaven
> Have not a close more sweet! 'Twas not for thee
> To watch the crimson for the bursting bud
> Beneath the unripe green,- the morning dew
> Could never give thy love a cause for joy…
> My grief's my own; how canst thou judge my pain?[471]

Her pain in this instance was not that of a wronged queen or a patriotic warrior, but of a helpless mother. Lindsay portrayed Boudica as increasingly subject to her passion, bordering on hysteria, for revenge. Lindsay presented Boadicea's struggle as being between being a good mother and being a devoted queen to her threatened land. So profound is her grief that she is moved to wish that her children had died in infancy, saving her from her current pain:

> Oh God! thou gavest
> Of my own flesh two girls, twins of my life,
> Which unpolluted in their mother's eyes
> And in the nation's bloom'd. In form they were,
> As in affection, matchless; wrapt in their being
> Was garnered up the whole stock of my life;
> Their language was my music, and their smile
> The sun in which I lived,- their pulses' life
> Gave mine its wonted vigour; all my soul
> Was parted 'twixt the twain.- Now, God! oh God!
> Had they but withered in their infancy,
> I had been bless'd![472]

In one climactic scene, Boudica and her army leave the Roman Temple of Jupiter in ruins with a number of Roman soldiers still inside. Boudica stumbles upon Julius, who, it transpires, is her daughter Malvina's Roman lover. She kills Julius and

[471] Lindsay, "Boadicea", 16.
[472] Ibid.

leaves the temple, only to meet her Malvina. Her thoughts of revenge momentarily forgotten, Boudica embraces her child, despite her betrayal.

> Little one, take rest;
> And I will once more rock thee in mine arms,
> Close up thine eyelids with this tender kiss
> - I dream yet in this sudden happiness,
> And tremble for the waking, lest all fade
> Into the void of air. – Crown of my life![473]

But upon learning that her mother murdered her lover, Malvina rejects Boudica's attempts to convince her that Roman Julius had used magic or poison to entice her away from her mother and, by implication, her race.

> Ah! kiss me not; I'll die without thy kiss.
> Here is my blood to dabble in, here his-
> Has thou shed both, thou cruel mother? . .
> - Thou shalt not keep me from him! What art thou?
> Gorgon, I'm not thy child![474]

Malvina runs back into the burning temple and dies alongside the body of her Roman lover.

A work that so clearly, even to the point of gratuitousness, exposed Boudica's feelings towards her children and the tension between her public role as queen and her private role as mother, is not something we would have encountered in previous centuries. Dramatists and biographers explored the private lives of their subjects in a way that would have been considered "impertinent" in previous centuries.[475] While previous playwrights who took Boudica as their subject confined their works to

[473] Lindsay, "Boadicea", 65.
[474] Lindsay, "Boadicea", 67.
[475] See Chapter One, and Holinshed's discussion of criminal activity in the *Chronicles* discussed in R. Helgerson, "Murder in Faversham" in D. Kelley and D. Sacks (eds) *The historical imagination*, pp. 133-158.

commenting on the fraught relationship between Romans and Britons as political and military actors, we see Boudica's private life laid bare for audiences in these new works.

The next work from this period was an overt commentary on Boudica's religion, as well as an exploration of the relationship between mother and children. Francis Barker's long dramatic poem "Boadicea" published in 1859 clearly expressed anxiety about heroising a Druid queen in an age of Christian civility. The poem's "good Christian sentiments" were praised in *The Baptist Magazine* in the winter of that year, but, the reviewer noted, little could be said for the quality of the rhyme.[476] More than many other works about Boudica, Barker's message was clearly evangelical. The Christian religion was very much alive in the ancient Britain described by Barker. He portrays Boudica's daughters as having been exposed to the Gospel by a family friend recently returned from Rome, and even the British slaves taken as prisoners to the imperial capital make long disquisitions on the merits of Christianity. Whole pages of Barker's work were given over to the words of recently converted Britons who make explicit the contrast between the good work of the Christians and the brutality of the Druids. Tellingly, the religions of "the east" are part of this commentary, with Boadicea's daughters expressing shock that the women in that part of the world are treated with such disrespect as to be placed in "harems; cribbed and caged".[477]

As in Lindsay's play, the death of her husband and protector prompts Boudica to fear for her family, not for her country, and she self-identifies with her role as mother rather than with the duties of queenship. She describes her fearful emotional condition at the beginning of the poem, contrasting it with the domestic happiness she had experienced when the king was alive:

[476] *The Baptist Magazine*, March, 1859.
[477] F. Barker, *Boadicea* (London: Jarrold and Sons, 1859) 44.

> Then in possession of each
> Varied joy, her heart could wish, she lived,
> A happy mother and a loving wife. . .
> She sees her daughters fatherless.
> Ye who have known a mother's anxious care,
> And seen her warm solicitude express,
> At shadow of a danger; ye can judge,
> Though faintly, of the feelings which oppressed
> Boadicea . . .[478]

Even the rousing speech she delivers before her troops prior to a decisive battle is couched in terms of loyalty to family, although in a form that extends to the entire nation. The children the Britons must protect are not their own natural children, Boudica says, but an imagined posterity of free offspring.

> Men! Britons! Fathers!
> I appeal to you: for yourselves, your wives,
> Your children; and for the honour, of our
> Common country. I call upon you all,
> To arouse yourselves, and struggle for freedom,
> To the death. Soon, soon, then, will you enjoy
> The palm of victory; and your children,
> And your children's children, will bless you; as
> They boast themselves, the offspring of the free.[479]

The Boudica portrayed by Barker has fewer hints of savagery about her than that created by Lindsay. This was likely due to the author's desire to write Boudica into a narrative that saw Christianity as a crucial influence in ancient Britain. Diverging from previous accounts, even fictional ones, Barker's Boadicea dies of a broken heart, slumped alone in her chariot amongst the dead and dying soldiers of her defeated army.

> Down in the seat,
> She sank; her head reclining on her hands,
> Rested o'er the chariot back; appearing
> As if by grief bowed down. Alas! for ever,
> That brave, maternal, noble, queenly heart,
> Had ceased to beat.[480]

[478] Barker, *Boadicea*, 4.
[479] Barker, *Boadicea*, 163-164.

This pathetic end was almost certainly an attempt by Barker to allay criticism of Boudica's purported final act. As we have seen in the case of Mrs. Owen's biography, Boudica's suicide had the potential to offend the sensibilities of Victorian commentators, and perhaps also an audience which looked to historical events for instruction and example. Rather than criticize the pagan Boudica for taking her own life, Barker conjectured a more acceptable end for a self-sacrificing mother and queen – the broken heart.

Aware that this ending contradicted the known facts of the story, Barker provided his readers with an historical explanation for his version of Boudica's death:

> Of course [Tacitus's] information would be obtained from some of his countrymen, returned from Britain; and these filled with prejudice, if not hatred, against the Britons, would naturally be led to ascribe her sudden death, to this with them not uncommon a cause. They would never conceive, of high feeling existing among a people, whom they had long endeavoured to debase, and bring into subjection; nor dream, that the spirit of Boadicea, even under the impulse of strong excitement-loved ones gone; friends falling around her; and hope lost – might in the inward struggle, burst its mortal coil; and thus find death, more instantaneously than by the most virulent poison in nature.[481]

Barker spun the facts of Boudica's story to suit his message, but he could not do so without an explanation, again showing the paramount importance of dividing truth from dramatic embellishment. Barker felt the need to explain his reasons for doing so not by claiming poetic licence, but by deducing that Tacitus had every reason to attempt to mar Boudica's reputation in the eyes of posterity. In part, Barker was making an historical argument about the influence of Christianity in ancient Britain, and by denying the facts recorded by Tacitus, he could make this argument more convincing.

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[480] Barker, *Boadicea*, 190-191.
[481] Barker, *Boadicea*, 196.

As mentioned above, previous writers on the subject of Boudica in the nineteenth century have argued that Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Queen Victoria's poet laureate from 1850 until his death in 1892, was inspired by events in India when he wrote his *Boädicea* (1859). Hingley and Unwin read Tennyson's poem as a condemnation of the ancient queen, and thus of her "savage" equivalents in mutinying India, but this hardly seems to be the case if one views the poem for what it was: a highly elaborated version of Cassius Dio's speech. It was also an extensive commentary on the violence and voluptuousness of the Roman presence in Britain, as well as being a very interesting example of experimental verse worthy of extended quotation:

> Hear Icenian, Catieuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
> Me the wife of rich Prasutagus, me the lover of liberty,
> Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
> Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violators!
> See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy!
> Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.
> Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony Camulodune!
> There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,
> Thither at their will they haled the yellow-ringleted Britoness--
> Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable.
> Shout Icenian, Catieuchlanian, shout Coritanian, Trinobant,
> Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously
> Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl'd.
> Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of Cunobeline!
> There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,
> Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy.
> There they dwelt and there they rioted; there--there--they dwell no more.[482]

According to one scholar of his work, Tennyson had an artistic interest in narratives of failure, and his poems can be seen to "engage pervasive cultural myths that transpose failure into success or defeat into victory…"[483] This would seem to fit with Tennyson's

[482] All excerpts from the poem are from "Boädicea" in C. Ricks. (ed), *The Poems of Tennyson*. (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd, 1969) 1118-1119.
[483] A.H. Harrison, *Victorian poets and the politics of culture: discourse and ideology* (London: University if Virginia Press, 1998) 65.

retelling of Boudica's story. Tennyson's poem ended prematurely, with a retelling of Boudica's successful campaigns against the Roman colonies of Camulodunum, Verulamium, and Londinium. Tennyson chose not to relate the story of Boudica's defeat as part of his narrative, perhaps deferring this responsibility to the reader, whose knowledge of the events presumably should have sufficed to fill in the gap between success and failure. If we follow Hingley and Unwin in taking the view that Tennyson's poem was a commentary on the Indian uprising, although this is conjecture, his message is not at all a clear one. The "imperialist"[484] Tennyson was critical of the vice and corruption rife among the Romans, and he saw their conduct as partially to blame for what ultimately became of their colonies in Britain:

> So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries
> Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid unanimous hand,
> Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,
> Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,
> Then her pulses at the clamoring of her enemy fainted away.
> Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds.

For reasons that will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter, by the middle of the nineteenth century, Boudica had come to be associated with Queen Victoria. It is possible that Tennyson felt it more appropriate to glorify Boudica than to condemn her. Arguably, however, the truth is even simpler than that. One might argue that Tennyson's poem should be read as nothing more than an exercise in poetry-writing, perhaps inspired by the receipt of Stothard's image of the famed incident.[485] *Boädicea* was one of his favourite poems, but with its jagged language and difficult meter, it was undeniably experimental. Tennyson wrote of the work, "Boadicea, no, I cannot publish

[484] Harrison, *Victorian poets*, 67.
[485] See Chapter Three.

her yet, perhaps never, for who can read her except myself?"[486] Even the poet's affectionate tone when referring to his Boudica poem would seem to cast into doubt that he had any negative feelings toward the subject.

Following on from the spate of dramatic and poetic works devoted to Boudica in the mid-century, it is worthwhile projecting our narrative forward at this point to a much later year, 1901, to address the question of Boudica and empire. This was the year in which the first historical novel about Boudica, *Britain's Greatness Foretold: The Prediction Fulfilled*, was published by Marie Trevelyan.[487] The work is a useful bridge into the final chapter of this thesis because it represents the culmination of many years of fictionalising Boudica's story. It also introduces the idea of Boudica as Victoria's direct predecessor, a theme that will be explored at greater length in the next chapter. *Britain's Greatness Foretold* is by far the longest fictional account of Boudica's activities produced before the late twentieth century. However, Boudica was not Trevelyan's main character. The author places a young woman, Golden Beauty, in the role of protagonist. By doing this, Trevelyan was able to weave a rousing adventure story for which the more brutal, disturbing, or otherwise unsuitable elements of Boudica's rebellion acted as the backdrop, rather than the main event. As the story unfolds at length, the young Briton, Golden Beauty distances herself from Boudica, who had been the heroine of her youth. As the Romans and Britons prepare to do battle, Golden Beauty soon realises that Boudica's cause is lost and, having failed to convince

[486] Quoted in *Poems of Tennyson*, 1119.
[487] M. Trevelyan, *Britain's greatness foretold: the prediction fulfilled* (London: John Hogg, 1901).There was a novella about Boudica published in 1810 by the female publisher Ann Kemmish. It was entitled *Heroic Females, or an authentic history of the surprising achievements and intrepid conduct of Boadicea, Queen of Iceni, and her two daughters*. (London: Ann Kemmish, 1810). However, only one copy of the work is extant. It is held at the New York Public Library, and it has not yet been possible for me to view it. If I am able to see it, it may shed some light on the interplay between fact and fiction in understandings of Boudica's story in the earlier part of the nineteenth century.

the deluded yet kindly queen of the need to surrender, Golden Beauty marries a Christian man and lives a quiet life of propriety and domestic happiness.

Aside from being the longest and most heavily fictionalised work about Boudica, the novel was also a tribute to Boudica and Victoria written shortly after Victoria's death. Marie Trevelyan's *Britain's Greatness Foretold: The Prediction Fulfilled* took its title from the perennially popular poem by William Cowper discussed in Chapter Three. Trevelyan's preface is an homage to both Boudica and Victoria. The druid's prediction that "Regions Caesar never knew thy posterity shall sway" had seemingly come true in the person of Queen Victoria. However, Trevelyan's portrayal of Boudica and her warlike women attendants was hardly a comparison of like with like. Instead, Trevelyan presented Victoria as a descendant of Boudica, and a much superior one. Her work also drew on the idea that Boudica's defeat was the necessary antecedent to Victoria's imperial triumph 2000 years later. Indeed, the preface to the work reads as a catalogue of evidence, much of it statistical, for the glory of Britain's empire.

It would be easy to overemphasise the importance of this one work, given the immensity of material produced in the period. It is true that Boudica's story acted as a historical reference point for writers during the Indian Mutiny, but any overt messages about that event seem to have been subsumed under storylines which dissected Boudica's relationship with her children. Trevelyan's attempt to link Boudica with the triumph of empire had a more direct reason behind it than an imagined similitude between the ancient Britons and the modern-day inhabitants of imperial holdings. Boudica's imagined association with Victoria was preeminent in Trevelyan's discussion. This was also true in other aspects of British historical culture after 1850. I

would argue that Boudica's identity was not that of an imperial heroine, but as a predecessor to Queen Victoria. This will be explored further in the next chapter.

Part V. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored some of the ways in which Boudica's story was written, mostly in the first half of the nineteenth century. The spread of the periodical press, the progress of communication technology, and rising literacy rates all fed a market for historical culture in the nineteenth century. I have argued that this was the period in which the sentimentalised narratives of national history began to fragment into individual stories retold in biography, as well as in forms of historical fiction such as plays and Marie Trevelyan's novel. However, I have also argued that viewing these developments as entirely new, unusual, or constituting a break from the historical cultures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is misguided. Like the demise of the chronicle in the face of new genres of historical production in the early seventeenth century, I would argue that the production of biographies, as well as works that had biographical elements such as the exploration of Boudica's emotional life, filled a growing demand for a certain kind of historical work.

In the next and final chapter, I will show how a body of work specific to the latter half of the nineteenth century, public sculpture, can show a very different kind of Boudica character to that represented in written works. While still celebrating the individual Boudica, statues commemorated an idealised type of heroine whose individual image was unproblematically patriotic and even royal. The makers of statues did not ignore her femininity or her warrior nature, but instead treated these as part of a heroic persona to be embraced and celebrated. The next chapter will also pick apart the

reasons behind this celebration. In addition, it will show how Boudica came to embody civic or local history and by extension national identity in England, but most especially in Wales.

Chapter Five

Queen Victoria I: Boudica and local and national pasts, c. 1850-1916

Even if we accept that the idea of popular history, or accessible history aimed at and articulated by non-specialists, is nothing new, it would still be impossible to deny that the nineteenth century is the most complex period in which to examine Boudica's reputation, at least within the boundaries of this thesis, and that this is due to the sheer quantity of material in the period. Therefore it seems necessary to convey in this final chapter the primary ways in which later nineteenth-century historical culture differed from that of earlier periods, at least insomuch as we can discern this through Boudica's example. One key word here is heroism. The idea of individual heroism is not new, as we have seen references to Boudica's heroic identity in the eighteenth century. However, the public commemoration of Boudica as a heroine is one aspect of the period that is particular to it. This is demonstrated primarily by the surge in the number of sculptures of Boudica created in the period from 1855-1916. Discussions of all of the five sculptures of Boudica will form much of the basis of this chapter, as will an investigation into the rationale behind each work.[488]

Previously, I have argued that Boudica was viewed as having played a crucial role in the early history of Britain (although the extent to which that period was itself considered important to the larger British narrative varied between authors) and it is my view that this in itself constituted a form of heroism. The previous chapter explored some of the ways in which Boudica was presented as an individual in collected

[488] Only three statues of Boudica have been identified in previous works, while the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association (PMSA) website lists only two. See MacDonald, "Boadicea", 57. Hoselitz, *Imagining Roman Britain*, 124. and the PMSA result at:
[http://www.pmsa.org.uk/search?q=boadicea&searchType=work-title#results-list]

biographies, and specifically as an individual placed within a narrative of female achievement. These biographies, while aimed at a growing audience of young and female readers, were intended to be read in private and to encourage moral behaviour. They celebrated Boudica as a great woman, albeit with misgivings about her suicide and her merciless conduct towards her enemies. Thus in Boudica's case, it is crucial to point out that the forms of heroism that were celebrated in the Victorian and Edwardian periods varied, but they were all evidence of what Geoffrey Cubitt has called society's "collective emotional investment" in a heroic character. Cubitt has argued that heroism is a function of a society's capacity to display collective emotional investment through both social and institutional means. That is, heroic reputations are circulated through commercial literature, news, images, etc., but are also propagated through official or formal state channels.[489] We have already noted how the state had been responsible for celebrating Boudica's actions through the naming of the *HMS Boadicea* in 1794, but there was much more to come in the later part of the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth century has been acknowledged as the great age for the celebrations of heroic reputations, and indeed, this period saw an exponential increase in the ways in which the individual was celebrated in public and revered as heroic.[490] But in assessing what was meant by the term "heroic" during the period, it is crucial to distinguish between these varying forms of heroic behaviour. Exemplarity, or the public glorification of a private individual, or perhaps a group of individuals, for a single act of

[489]G. Cubitt, "Introduction" in G. Cubitt and A. Warren (eds), *Heroic reputations and exemplary lives*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).
[490] G. Cubitt and A. Warren (eds), *Heroic reputations and exemplary lives* cited above is the most comprehensive study of the phenomenon. See also A. Yarrington, *The commemoration of the hero, 1800-1864: monuments to the British victors of the Napoleonic Wars* (London: Garland, 1988); M. Jones, *The last great quest: Captain Scott's Antarctic sacrifice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); J. Price, "Everyday Heroism in Britain 1850-1914", unpublished PhD thesis (King's College London, 2010); J. Price, "Postman's Park: the G.F. Watts monument to heroic self-sacrifice", *History Workshop Journal* (2007) 254-278.

moral courage worthy of emulation by the wider public differed from the worship of heroic "great men." As John Price has shown, "Everyday heroes" could be men, women, or children from any background, and their behaviour was not seen as part of a wider historical narrative.

One manifestation of the nineteenth-century idea of "heroes of history" comes from Thomas Carlyle's series of lectures *On Heroes, Heroism, and Hero-Worship* delivered in the 1840s. Carlyle asserted that history is the collected biography of great men. That Carlyle saw it necessary to conceptualise and explain the phenomenon of hero-worship testifies to the strength of the idea by the mid-nineteenth century, although the imitation of historical heroes was encouraged even in the mid-eighteenth century.[491] But Carlyle's heroes were distinguished by their very inimitability. Carlyle's own selections of "great men" ran from heroic kings to poets to prophets. The Norse god Odin, the prophet Muhammad, William Shakespeare, Oliver Cromwell, and Napoleon all featured in Carlyle's idea of heroism. Even in the face of opposition, these great men (never women, in Carlyle's account) single-handedly managed to heave their fellow men forward in the struggle to achieve civilization and enlightenment. While heroic men need not have exhibited exemplary moral conduct at all times, they contributed mightily to the progress of all members of their nation –even all of mankind – and therefore formed a corps of heroic "great men" of history. In Carlyle's words:

> Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer

[491] See discussion of Campbell's *The Rational Amusement* (1754) in Chapter Two.

> material result, the practical realization and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world…[492]

Rosemary Mitchell has argued that collective biographies such as those discussed in Chapter Four were a particularly female response to Thomas Carlyle's definition of history as being made up of the lives and actions of Great Men.[493] Biographical writers struggled with Boudica's actions, giving lie to the distinction between exemplary moral conduct and the sort of heroic behaviour that impacted the trajectory of history. In light of this distinction, Boudica should be more appropriately placed in the arena of Carlylean historical hero. Concluding that biographical catalogues constituted a female version of the *national* past is suspect, given that their primary objective was not to construct a holistic feminized version of an existing masculine history of the nation, but to edify women with stories of their predecessors, most of whom did not live public lives. It was a woman's lot to "bravely live and die in the home," as one contemporary put it.[494] Boudica simply did not fit this mould.

The biographical writers discussed in the previous chapter attempted, sometimes with difficulty, to place Boudica in a narrative of exemplarity, when in fact she might fit more easily into Carlyle's expression of the heroic ideal. Despite efforts to weave her into a civilised portrayal of ancient Britain, such as Francis Barker's evangelically inspired poem of 1859, fidelity to the historical record left little choice but for works to address the ways in which Boudica's own conduct rendered her a questionable

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[492]T. Carlyle, P.C. Parr (ed), *Carlyle's lectures on heroes, hero-worship and the heroic in history* (London: Clarendon Press, 1920) 3. On the primacy of the individual in late Victorian historical writing see C. Parker, *The English historical tradition since 1850* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1990) 22-50.
[493]R. Mitchell, "The red queen and the white queen" in *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives*, 157-177.
[494] J. Johnson, *Brave Women: who have been distinguished for heroic actions and noble virtues, etc*. (Edinburgh:1875) Unsurprisingly, Johnson did not include Boudica in his collection.

exemplar. This was a pitfall unique to the written genres, such as collective biography, which by virtue of their discursive nature, and sometimes their didactic purpose, were forced to grapple with difficult issues of religion and female exemplarity to which Boudica could offer no simple solution. But this did not render Boudica an unsuitable subject for heroisation during the age of hero-worship. First, the newly popular medium of public sculpture was a means by which Boudica could be celebrated for her individuality without the need to delve too deeply into her conduct or to reconcile the savagery associated with the period in history in which she flourished with the sensibilities of the era in which she was being celebrated.

Another factor that sets the late nineteenth century apart from much of the period before is the presence of a queen on the throne. Boudica's associations with other queens, such as Anne and Caroline, were not numerous, indicating that something more than a shared femininity was necessary if explicit links were to be drawn between Boudica and another queen. Thus I argue here that Boudica's imagined association with Queen Victoria was not simply the result of their shared femininity, and neither was it due to Cowper having used Boudica's story as a prophecy of British glory – a prophecy of which Victoria could be seen as the fulfilment. Both of these were factors, but the most significant element of the association between the two queens was the historic coincidence that the Queen Boudica and Queen Victoria shared a name.

This was crucial to Boudica's heroic identity in Victorian Wales. The historian of Wales, Theophilus Evans, whose history of the principality was published in Welsh in 1716, had translated "Boadicea" as "Buddug", the Welsh word for "victory." Evans could not possibly have known that Queen Victoria would inherit the throne, and thus the link between Boudica and Victoria was not an invented fancy of the Victorians, or

the product of Victorian enthusiasm for imperial glory, but rather a genuine coincidence discovered and circulated by supporters of the monarch in Wales. The coincidence was soon acknowledged and feted outside of Wales, but it seems to have originated there. Some Welshmen asserted the exceptional nature of Welsh culture though the appropriation of Boudica and by extension of Victoria herself, and this warrants detailed discussion. The enthusiasm for Boudica as a counterpart to Victoria overlaps to some degree with the more localised enthusiasm for Boudica among a certain cross-section of Welshmen.

This chapter also argues that to a large extent, the celebration of Boudica as an individual outside of written works was bound to specific localities, all of which could point to Boudica as a means of asserting local importance in the national story. Parts of London, the towns of St Albans and Colchester, as well other areas in Essex, and parts of Wales explicitly identified themselves with Boudica in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The inhabitants, or a cross-section of the inhabitants of these areas, did this either by including Boudica in local historical pageants, as Bury St Edmunds did, or by erecting statues of her in newly build civic centres, as was the case in Colchester Town Hall and Cardiff City Hall.

As we have seen, Boudica did not feature very heavily in the "comparative project" of queenship discussed in the previous chapter, so her association with Victoria was less as a direct comparison of like with like than it was a symbolic association between two queens whose differences were as significant as their similarities. Boudica and Victoria were the two women who presided over the "beginning" and the "end" of

British history.[495] Thus this chapter argues that because of her links with Queen Victoria and her importance to local history, Boudica was a heroine of British insularity in the nineteenth century in a similar manner as she had been in the patriotic climate in the age of Richard Glover. This differs from previous conceptualisations of Boudica's heroism during the Victorian period as being reducible to the celebration of imperial glory through an ancient resister of imperialism. This chapter explores the overlapping notions of heroism and queenship, as well as the ways in which Boudica was celebrated at a local and by extension national level. This will be done through studies of her five appearances in public sculpture. This chapter also explores the idea of Boudica as a heroine specific to Wales. The importance of this distinction between the Welsh Buddug and the English Boadicea will lead to some discussion of the crucial role that the past played in discourses of British national identity.

Part I. Boudica's appearances in sculpture

Between 1855 and 1916, no fewer than five statues of Boudica were created and erected across Britain. The first was a private commission for Somerleyton Hall in Suffolk. Of the rest, two were in London: one, no longer extant, in the East End, and the other, more famously, on Westminster Bridge. The fourth can be found on the façade of Colchester Town Hall. The final statue appeared in Cardiff in 1916 – the erection of which marks the end date of this thesis. Boudica was proposed as one of four statues to adorn the new Blackfriars Bridge in 1861, on which she would have been joined by King Alfred, Sir William Walworth, and Queen Victoria, but this did not come to pass.[496]

[495] Titles such as E.C. Harvey's "English Leaders of the Past: Boadicea to Victoria" (Redditch: Thomas Evans, 1903) demonstrate this link
[496] *The Observer*, 30 December 1861.

The first statue of Boudica was the work of John Thomas (1813-1862) (see Figure 13).[497] John Thomas is not a well-known sculptor today, yet his works have been seen by almost every visitor to London since the mid-nineteenth century. This is because Thomas was responsible for all the figures that adorn the outside of the new Houses of Parliament, rebuilt in the 1840s. In the early 1850s, Sir Morton Peto of Peto and Betts, the firm responsible for the construction of the new Houses of Parliament, commissioned Thomas to create a statue of Boudica and her daughters for his family home, Somerleyton Hall in Suffolk. Thomas was also engaged in renovating Peto's house and grounds at the same time as he was overseeing the decoration of the Houses of Parliament. Thomas completed the statue in 1855 and exhibited it at the Royal Academy in 1856.[498] According to one reviewer, the statue was meant to show Boudica just as she had finished delivering her moving speech to the assembled host of British troops. Working from the account given by Paul Rapin de Thoyras, the reviewer related the last words of Boudica's speech as: "It is much better to fall honourably in defence of liberty, than be again exposed to the outrages of the Romans." Despite these warlike words, the review noted that, "Mr. Thomas has assumed, as he had a right to do in the absence of contrary evidence, that the queen of the Iceni and her daughters were cast in nature's fairest mould…"[499]

It is tempting to link John Thomas's work on the Houses of Parliament with his Boudica statue, but there is no evidence to suggest that there was any intention of placing the statue within the confines of the new building. But Boudica was considered

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[497] M. H. Port, "Barry, Sir Charles (1795–1860)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford University Press. Sept 2004. online edn, Oct 2008. [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1550, accessed 9 Feb 2010].
[498] *The Art Journal*. 29 May 1857.
[499] Ibid.

as a possible subject in the Houses of Parliament. We have already referred to Thomas Woolner's proposed model of "The Death of Boadicea", and no fewer than five paintings of Boudica were submitted to the Westminster Hall cartoon competition in 1843. H.C. Selous's painting won him a prize, but none of the paintings made it into the finished building.[500] This, one must conclude, was because the history presented in the Houses of Parliament was thoroughly Anglo-Saxon, and took a view of the English constitution as being of Teutonic origin. Such an interpretation rendered early British history irrelevant to the task of explaining the origins of government.[501] This was a view also evident in the works of such professional historians as E.A. Freeman and William Stubbs, whose works focused almost exclusively on the Saxon and Norman periods of history.[502] Boudica and the ancient Britons had no place in an emphatically Anglo-Saxon idea of history.

But another example of Boudica in sculpture showed her as part of a narrative of female leadership. This was not a narrative that was exclusively British or English. It was also shorn of the moral comparisons evident in collected biographies. It was a series of statues displayed in the Queen's Hall in the People's Palace in London's East End (See Figures 14 and 15). The People's Palace, for which the Queen's Hall was completed in 1887, was intended as a gathering place for the East End's "toiling population".[503] Queen Victoria presided over its opening in May 1887.[504] Until its

[500] T.S.R. Boase, "The decoration of the New Palace of Westminster, 1841-1863" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* (1954) 319-358, p. 330.
[501] R. Quinault, "Westminster and the Victorian constitution," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1992) 79-104.
[502] J.W. Burrow, *A liberal descent: Victorian historians and the English past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); H.A. MacDougall, *Racial myth and English history: Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons* (Hanover, NH: Harvest House, 1982). See also P. Mandler, *The English national character: the history of an idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair* (London: Yale University Press, 2006), ch. 3.
[503] *The Times*, 16 May 1887.

destruction by fire in 1931, the People's Palace would be home to working men's night classes, lectures, children's activities, concerts, boxing matches, and many other distractions for the pleasure of the working people of London's East End. Its legacy as a centre for training and teaching led to the rebuilt People's Palace being absorbed into the present-day Queen Mary, University of London. Only the frontage of the previous structure is still visible on the site today.[505]

The design of the Queen's Hall was by E.R. Robson (1835-1917), well-known for his pioneering work as surveyor on the London school board. Robson's design principles had a lasting effect on school-building throughout England in the early twentieth century, but the Queen's Hall was intended as a much more grand tribute to the monarch. Victoria had been the patron of the People's Palace project, and the Queen's Hall was dominated on its south side by a statue of her. But the Hall was also home to twenty-two other sculptures of queens. The statues of the queens were the work of Pierre-Francoise Verheyden (b.1842), a Belgian sculptor who also worked as a caricaturist for *Vanity Fair* under the name VER. Verheyden never achieved any great fame as a sculptor, but this was not from lack of talent. He had worked for many years in Belgium and France, but was forced to leave Paris at the outbreak of the Franco-German war, when he moved to England.[506] Verheyden's most public moment came in 1882 when he took part in the libel trial of Belt v. Lawes, in which the proprietor of *Vanity Fair*, Charles Lawes, accused the sculptor Richard Belt of employing assistants as "ghost sculptors." Verheyden was called to testify as one of these talented sculptors

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[504] G. Godwin, *Queen Mary College: an adventure in education* (London: Queen Mary College and the Acorn Press, 1939). See also G.P. Moss and M.V. Saville, *From palace to college: an illustrated account of Queen Mary College (University of London)* (London: Queen Mary College, 1985).
[505] For the ideological foundations of the People's Palace see S. Joyce, "Castles in the air: the People's Palace, cultural reformation, and the East End working class", *Victorian Studies* (1996) 513-538.
[506] *The Times*, 16 November 1882.

"employed by incompetent artists secretly to do up their work and make it look artistic".[507]

In Verheyden's Queen's Hall, effigies of female monarchs from Britain and around the world, and from all periods of history were aligned along the side walls. There were ten queens on each side, and two on the north wall flanking the magnificent concert organ placed as a counterbalance to the large statue of Victoria on the opposite wall.[508] Queens from Spain, Hungary, Scotland, Denmark, France, as well as other nations were present on the walls of the Queen's Hall. The queens were arranged chronologically, and the two earliest queens occupied the north wall: the Old Testament's Queen Esther, and the ancient British queen Boudica. This statue of Boudica has been overlooked by recent writers, but its presence in the Queen's Hall in the East End demonstrates Boudica's currency not only as an individual heroine, but as a queen amongst other queens. Shorn of the need to explain the details of her story, Boudica could simply symbolise a noble British past, and play a role as a romantic, feminised figure amongst other celebrated women. These two early examples of Boudica in sculpture show two very different sides to her commemoration in statuary. John Thomas's statue for Morton Peto sat tucked away in a family home, and the location of the marble original is uncertain, although a bronze model is still extant in Brecon, Wales.[509] The Queen's Hall Boudica was part of a celebration of queenship

[507] Quoted in J. Sankey, "The sculptor's ghost- the case of Belt v. Lawes" in *Sculpture Journal*. 16.2, (2007). My thanks to the author for providing me with a copy of his work. See also B. Read, *Victorian Sculpture* (London: Yale University Press, 1982) 66. Read lists the full Times Law Reports in n. 4, p. 389. Belt won the case and was awarded damages of £5000.
[508] A diagram of the arrangement of the statues is found in *The Handbook to the People's Palace*, 1887. Queen Mary University Archives.
[509] The bronze was mistaken as the work of John Evan Thomas (1810-1873) and transported to Brecon, that sculptor's hometown, in the 1980s. See the Public Monument and Sculpture Association National Recording Project. "Statue of Boadicea." [http://www.pmsa.org.uk/pmsa-database/11375/] Accessed 12 November 2012.

more generally, and of Victoria in particular. The Queen's Hall was consumed by fire in 1931 and only the statue of Victoria managed to survive the conflagration.

The other three statues of Boudica produced in the last decade of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century are still extant, and are undeniably far more significant in the larger story of Boudica's meaning in contemporary historical culture. The first is Thomas Thornycroft's statue on Westminster Bridge (see Figure 16). Recent writers have claimed that the sculpture was erected as a celebration of the ascent of the British empire.[510] However, I argue that, like its counterparts in Cardiff and Colchester, Thornycroft's statue was illustrative of a much more insular celebration of London as a civic centre. Its identity as the focal point of the British empire was secondary to this, at least for those individuals who advocated for its erection. As was the case with Boudica's connection to the Indian Uprising, her significance predated her local commemoration. Her story did not need to be reinvented, nor did it necessarily connect to imperial triumph. In this way, Thomas Thornycroft's Boudica statue is in keeping with those which later appeared in Colchester and Cardiff, both of which were connected with local pride and civic culture. This is also evident in the case of the local historical pageants in which Boudica appeared. Rather than being "invented" for the present, I argue that it was Boudica's perceived identity as an "authentic" historical figure with a "verified" role in local and national history that was most crucial to her appearance in the historical culture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Heroic commemoration in the form of public sculpture was a development unique to the period. The same was true of the historical pageants, which came into vogue in the late

[510] M. Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 49-50. Warner asserts that the Victorians did not see the contradiction between Boudica's anti-imperialist rebellion and the "imperialism" they were attributing to her.

Victorian period and peaked in the Edwardian era. That Boudica should have appeared in both merely shows that no matter what was happening in the historical culture of a given period, as a historical figure, Boudica was bound to be a part of it.

Part II. Londinium, Camulodunum and Verulamium

It had long been acknowledged that Boudica was not just a part of British history, but of London history. Edmund Bolton had expressed this opinion in *London, King Charles His Augusta, or City Royal*, published in 1647, and it was to be repeated over and over again in countless histories of the city. Boudica's long association with London and its environs stemmed from the tradition that the final battle between the Britons and the Romans took place in or near the city.[511] One nineteenth-century writer speculated that the remains of a camp or stronghold around Ambresbury Banks, in Epping Forest, might have been the site of Boudica's final, fatal encampment. Two obelisks in the area of Chingford and Ambresbury Banks lent some credence to the idea, but commentators remained divided on the exact location of Boudica's final battle, let alone where her body might have been buried.[512] The area around King's Cross, formerly known as Battle Bridge, was also considered a potential site for Boudica's last stand.[513] There was some consternation when the location was not even considered as a permanent home for Thomas Thornycroft's now-famous statue of Boudica, which made its permanent home in Central, not north, London. A letter to *The Echo* in the winter of 1898 enquired why the statue should be placed anywhere else but Pentonville Hill on the Caledonian Road

[511] This claim was made by prominent local antiquaries in the eighteenth century, such as in P. Morant, *The history and antiquities of the town and borough of Colchester*… (London: 1748) pp.
[512] See discussion in E. Walford, *Greater London: a narrative of its history its people and its places*, Vol. I (London: Cassell and Company Limited, 1894) 418-423.
[513] It has not been possible for me to determine the origin of the myth that Boudica is buried under Platform 10 at King's Cross, but it may have stemmed from this and become more specific over time.

which, the writer asserted, was where the ancient queen's final battle had been fought and lost. "There it would be a mark of the locality and her endeavour also… There are few monuments or statues to adorn the vicinity. Let us have one that is fitting and that we may fairly claim."[514] There were other, less contentious memorials to Boudica's relationship with London, such as the Thames steamer *Boadicea* launched in 1898.[515]

But by far the most important tribute to Boudica in London was Thomas Thornycroft's massive Boadicea group. The date for the statue's erection has been somewhat erroneously given as 1902, leading scholars to emphasise the importance of the wars in South Africa in the decision-making process that led to Boudica's effigy being placed on the Victoria Embankment.[516] 1902 was indeed the year in which the bronze statue was permanently housed on the site, but the story behind the work began many years before that, and the statue had been on public display on the site in 1898. Additionally, the strident militarism of the statue and the use of Cowper's "Regions Caesar never knew/Thy posterity shall sway" as an inscription have understandably led some scholars to view the statue as a straightforward testimony to imperial triumph at a point when the power of the empire was being tested abroad during the Boer War. The story behind the statue is in fact far more revealing, if less sensational than a celebration of imperial glory. The statue was a tribute to Boudica as a famous Londoner in an age of heroic commemoration. But it was also an acknowledgement that she was, arguably, Victoria's namesake. That gives Boudica's story a particular significance in the period, but not one which had to be invented. The initial impetus behind the statue was local, not national, in character.

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[514] *The Echo*, 11 February 1898.
[515] F. Burtt, *Steamers of the Thames and Medway*. (London: Richard Tilling, 1949) 79-81. *Boadicea* carried Thames Steamboat Company passengers until 1912.
[516] Warner, *Monuments and maidens*, 50.

Thomas Thornycroft (1815-1885)[517] was a favourite of the royal family. After the death of Prince Albert, Thornycroft was commissioned to create three equestrian statues of the Prince Consort. Still deeply in mourning, Queen Victoria appeared in public for the first time in five years at the unveiling of one of these statues in Wolverhampton in 1866.[518] His wife Mary Thornycroft was a fine sculptor in her own right and produced statuettes of all Victoria's children, of which it was said the queen very much approved.[519] Before his death, Prince Albert had taken a particular interest in Thomas's work, including the "Boadicea Group", and even lent his own horses as models for the ones which now career in front of Boudica's chariot. Thornycroft had begun the statuary group in the mid-1850s, and it took him fifteen years to complete. Without an official commission, he divided his time between "Boadicea" and his other works, as well as his continuing interest in boat-building.[520] It is probable that the final model was finished by 1871, but Thornycroft continued to make modifications until just a few years before his death in 1885.[521] Eventually, the model of Boadicea and her daughters was moved to a storage warehouse in Chiswick, where it would reside until events took a turn in its favour.[522]

In a completely unrelated endeavour in 1894, the London County Council approved a decision to excavate the spot on Hampstead Heath in north London which

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[517] In Nielsen, "Boadicea onstage", n.2, Nielsen gives Hamo Thornycroft, Thomas's son, as the maker of the Boudica sculpture. Nielsen cites M. Warner, 'Monuments and Maidens', pp. 50-51, as her source for this information. However, Warner correctly attributes the statue to Thomas Thornycroft on the pages cited by Nielsen.
[518] E.Thornycroft, *Bronze and steel: the life of Thomas Thornycroft, sculptor and engineer* (Shipton on Stour: King's Stone Press, 1932) 58.
[519] Thornycroft, *Bronze and steel*, 55.
[520] Thornycroft, *Bronze and steel*, 57.
[521] Thornycroft, *Bronze and steel*, 70.
[522] The "bold, colossal head of Boadicea" displayed by Thomas Thornycroft at the Royal Academy in May 1864 almost certainly came from his model for the statue group. *The Observer*, 8 May 1864. There is no evidence that the finished model was ever exhibited publically, although a visitor to Thornycroft's studio published a complimentary review in *The Times*, 21 July 1871.

had come to be known as "Boadicea's Mound". The origin of this name has proven impossible to determine, but it was likely to have been a particular notion of the members of the local community, and one of relatively modern origin. The initial impetus to open the tumulus came from the Northwest District Subcommittee of the LCC's Parks and Open Spaces Committee. This body was responsible for a number of parks and commons in the north-western parts of London, amongst them Hampstead Heath and Parliament Hill Fields.[523] The motivation behind the Subcommittee's effort to open the tumulus remains unclear, but it seems likely that subject was discussed at the behest of one of the subcommittee members, or at the request of some member of the community. Pure curiosity surrounding what local legend held to be the grave of an ancient queen almost certainly had something to do with the decision to open the tumulus. Londoners, like members of the public in towns of lesser status such as Colchester, sought to link their own locale to Boudica in order to give it yet more importance in the national arena. Given Boudica's association with Queen Victoria, a hoard of artefacts from the ancient queen's grave would also have been a fitting tribute at the modern monarch's Diamond Jubilee celebrations; this may have provided another possible motivation for the excavation.

Permission for the dig had not been granted by the end of summer 1894, so no date for its commencement could be published in the newspapers. Even so, press coverage of the proposal prompted a flurry of letters to the Clerk of the North-west District Subcommittee. These came from amateur and professional archaeologists alike,

[523] London Metropolitan Archive. LCC/MIN/8738. Parks and Open Spaces Committee, Northwest District Subcommittee Minutes. 3 October 1894. All LCC documents refer to the LMA collections.

all of them eager to be present at the as-yet-unconfirmed excavation.[524] Typical of these letters was that of C.E. Fagan of the Natural History section at the British Museum. "Is it correct that the London County Council have given directions to examine the tumulus in Parliament Hill, which tradition marks as the burial place of Queen Boadicea? If so, may I ask if you can give me any idea of when the work will be commenced?"[525] In addition to scholarly interest, the photographic studio for the *Strand Magazine* and the *St James Budget*, Manor and Meredith, perhaps anticipating the public sensation such finds might produce, sent an early request to photograph any "objects of interest" which might be unearthed if the dig were successful.[526] In October 1894, the LCC assented to the Subcommittee's request and work began on 31 October 1894 under the superintendence of Charles Hercules Read (1857-1929), who undertook the project and waived any right to a fee.[527]

Read was a self-taught antiquarian, archaeologist and close friend of A.W. Franks, the Keeper of the British Museum's Department of British and Medieval Antiquities. That was the same collection to which Read would himself be appointed Assistant Keeper before he replaced Franks as head of the collections when the latter retired in 1896. Read excavated "Boadicea's Mound" over a period of days and his report was ready by the time of the November meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, a body of which he was honorary secretary and later twice president. In the report he delivered to the Society, Read concluded that, as he had always believed, there was no link between the barrow and the ancient warrior queen. "It is scarcely necessary,

[524] Letters were received throughout the summer recess and compiled at the October meeting. LCC/MIN/8818, Parks and Open Spaces Committee, Presented Papers, 12 October 1894.
[525] LCC/MIN/8818. Letter dated 16 August 1894.
[526] LCC/MIN/8818. Letter dated 30 July 1894.
[527] *The North-Eastern Daily Gazette*. 23 October 1894.

however, to bring forward evidence to prove that popular nomenclature is seldom supported by historical fact."[528] Read confessed that he had never come across any but modern references to the mound as Boudica's final resting place.[529] In other words, neither the LCC nor the British Museum's expert had anything but inexpert testimony and local legend to legitimise the project, yet they went ahead regardless. Read described to his assembled colleagues his careful study of the exposed mound and the few meagre items he was able to locate, mostly from the previous two centuries.

It is possible that even at an early point in his career, Read saw the utility of famous historical figures such as Boudica for engaging the public in its past history. Speaking many years after the dig at Hampstead Heath, as Keeper of the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities, Read expressed the need for archaeologists and antiquarians to engage the public with the past, and to safeguard the remains of that past by petitioning for government funds. Read was firmly of the opinion that, "...such intellectual enterprises as ours add to the intellectual food of the nation, and the mere fact that such tasks are being carried on in the country helps to arouse and quicken the intelligence of the oft-quoted man on the street; they provide him with sane subjects of conversation; they help to revive in his mind long forgotten scraps of history or tradition; they finally assume the form of crystallised fact and fill the gaps in school histories, and thus eventually, if not at first, they become directly helpful in education and an essential part of it." [530]

And indeed, back in 1894, Read and his team of helpers were watched "with an interest so keen that it may almost be called feverish... there is undoubtedly a

[528] *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, XV. (22 November 1894) 233-255, p. 241.
[529] *PSA.* XV, 240-241.
[530] PSA. XXIII. (1911) 439-443.

fascination even for the untutored mind in respect to the places of sepulchre, whether authentic or suppositious, of historic personages whose deeds have been handed on to us..."[531] While the project might have proved fruitless as an archaeological endeavour, the dig at Parliament Hill had a different sort of impact. One of the interested members of the public to see coverage of the excavation in the newspapers was the naval engineer John Isaac Thornycroft, Thomas Thornycroft's son, and the brother of the sculptor Sir William Hamo Thornycroft. John Isaac Thornycroft approached his neighbour, Sir William Bull (1863-1931), with the suggestion that his father's statue of Boudica might be an appropriate headstone if the ancient queen's grave were to be uncovered during the course of the excavation in north London. William Bull was ideally suited to taking on the task. He was Conservative MP for the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, as well as a member of the London County Council, where he sat on the Parks and Open Spaces Committee's North-west District Subcommittee, among others.[532] He was perfectly placed to advocate for Thornycroft's statue at the LCC.

Aside from his official positions, William Bull was also a tireless advocate for the beautification of London, and he was enthusiastic about the suggestion for a new public work of art. He brought news of Thornycroft's offer to the LCC, but without awaiting the LCC's permission, Bull ordered the plaster model to be taken to the bronze foundry of John W. Singer and Sons in September 1896. The foundry agreed to keep the model until the money could be raised to complete the bronze work.[533] However, the LCC, having dithered in making the decision, finally rejected Bull's pleas for the

[531] *The Morning Post*. 2 November 1894.
[532] Bull's papers are held at the Churchill Archives in Cambridge. His son, Peter, also wrote an engaging autobiography which included much information on his father's later career. See P. Bull, *Bulls in the Meadows* (London: P. Davies, 1957)
[533] Letter from Singer and Sons to William Bull, 28 September 1896. William Bull Papers, 2/12. Churchill Archives, Cambridge.

Council to raise funds for the Boudica statue on the grounds that no tomb had been found in Parliament Hill Fields, which had been the proposed home of the finished statue. In addition, casting the bronze model was estimated to cost a hefty £6000.[534] The real figure was in fact much less, with the foundry's estimate for casting being only £1995,[535] and the whole project – from casting to placement – was estimated to cost only £3000.

A discovery made during this process, which further damaged Bull's case, was that the newly formed London County Council did not in fact have the authority to raise funds for public works of art in the city; thus dispensation had to be obtained from parliament if the funds were to be raised at all. The LCC was reluctant to do this, but John Isaac Thornycroft was undeterred. He offered to have the statue cast in bronze at his own expense if the LCC could find the funds to repay him at a later date.[536] The LCC finally went about seeking parliamentary powers to raise the funds, but in the meantime, the Council could not promise Mr. Thornycroft that any repayment would be forthcoming, even if parliament granted the LCC the powers to raise funds for the provision of works of art in London.[537] Again these setbacks did not dampen either Thornycroft's or William Bull's enthusiasm for the work. Instead Bull formed the Boadicea Fund Committee and began to appeal to the public for subscriptions.[538] The bronze casting began in 1897, and Bull, who took a personal interest in the whole process, was photographed with various dismembered parts of the statue for an article in *The Sketch* on 22 September 1897.

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[534] LCC/MIN/6323. General Purposes Committee, Presented Papers, 22 December 1896.
[535] Singer and Sons to William Bull, 28 September 1896. Bull 2/12
[536] LCC/MIN/6323. 2 February 1897.
[537] *The British Architect*, 25 December 1896.
[538] A letter from Bull was printed in *The Times*, 2 March 1896 and *The Globe*, 29 July 1896.

Aside from the fraught question of how to pay for the "Boadicea Group", there was the equally important one of where to place the finished work. As the LCC had pointed out, Hampstead Heath no longer seemed appropriate given that the tumulus had been proven once and for all to have no connection to Boudica. Various alternatives were debated,[539] but the north-eastern corner of Westminster Bridge, across from parliament's clock tower, eventually won the day. By Bull's efforts, the £3000 was raised for the statue and its erection, and a pedestal was provided by the London County Council.[540] Unfortunately, the bronze statue was not ready in time to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, which Bull had hoped to mark with his statue of Victoria's primitive counterpart.[541] This delay, coupled with the prominence of the site, led to the LCC's decision that the plaster model should be erected on the proposed site to undergo a sort of trial period during which the public could voice its opinion on both the site and the work itself.[542] The model was duly placed on 16 January 1898.

The plaster model of Boudica with her two daughters seated in a scythe-wheeled war chariot pulled by two galloping horses, was painted to look like bronze and appeared on Westminster Bridge without ceremony. The arrival of an 18-foot-tall mock bronze woman weighing five tonnes directly across the road from the Houses of Parliament understandably created some stir, and reaction in the press was immediate. It was said that London awoke on that morning "to find itself possessed of one of the finest historical monuments."[543] A week after the statue's placement, it was reported that "thousands have made a pilgrimage to the Embankment, and submitted Mr.

[539] Thomas Thornycroft was himself believed to have favoured Kensington Gardens as the setting for his massive work. *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 January 1898.
[540] *The Echo*, 19 January 1898.
[541] LCC/MIN/6324. General Purposes Committee, Presented Papers, 25 January 1897.
[542] *The Morning Post*, 19 January 1898.
[543] *The Birmingham Mail*, 18 January 1898.

Thornycroft's great work to critical examination...an observer would be justified in pronouncing the general verdict a favourable one."[544] Even Queen Victoria paid a personal visit to the Embankment to view the work. The illustrated magazine *Black and White* printed an artist's impression of the meeting between the ancient and modern queens on its cover (see Frontispiece).[545]

Public reaction was not always favourable, and some critical letters appeared in the press, which objected to the statue both on the grounds of its placement and its weakness as a work of art.[546] But many other commentators were enthusiastic about the work, especially as it added to the catalogue of London's monuments and public works of art at a time when some people had a sense that their city was being outshone by the capitals of the continent.[547] William Bull's professed incentive had been to adorn his home city with a statue celebrating "British pluck".[548] Some commentators saw the merit in this:

> [The statue] overlooks the most important river in the Empire, of which the British warrior queen is one of the heroines. It faces the British Parliament. 'Regions Caesar never knew/Thy posterity shall sway.' These words from Cowper are on the pedestal. The poem containing them has done more than all the histories to make Boadicea famous...Conflicting views of the merits of the group have been expressed, but it is immeasurably superior to almost every other in London, rivalling the statue of Richard the Lion-hearted in grandeur and surpassing it in patriotic suggestiveness.[549]

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[544] *The London Argus*, 22 January 1898.
[545] *Black and White*, 5 March 1898.
[546] *The Times*, 24 January 1898; *The Times*, 3 February 1898; *The British Architect*, 21 January 1898; *The Builder*, 29 January 1898.
[547] *The Globe*, 19 January 1898; *The Sketch*, 26 January, 1898; *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 January 1898; *The Artist*, February 1898.The point about London lagging behind in the capital city grandeur stakes appeared in *The Daily News*, 18 January 1898, as well as in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 January 1898.
[548] William Bull, *Letter to The Times*, 2 March 1896.
[549] *The Daily News*, 18 January 1898.

This comment saw Boudica's statue making a more patriotic statement, but there were other sides to this. Boudica's statue was also linked directly with the excavation on Hampstead Heath and to the glorification of London, not, it would seem, to the glory of empire. As one observer reported:

> The vain search made a few years ago by the London County Council for the grave of Boadicea, was productive of much interest and amusement, and now the almost forgotten quest is brought to the memory of the public by the erection on the embankment of a model of a statue of this queen...To say the group is very Frenchy would be an error on the side of extravagance, but it is such as is usually only seen in art museums, and not exposed to the uncultivated gaze of the general public in one of the most important thoroughfares of a big city. If the Council approve, and the model is displaced by the original, the public statues of London will be decidedly the better for it.[550]

But in general, the public response to the statue was favourable, and praise was expressed both for Boudica as a heroine of the British past, as well as for Thomas Thornycroft as an artist. The positive public response led the London County Council to agree that, when it was finished, the bronze "Boadicea Group" should be placed on the site where the plaster model had stood on Westminster Bridge. But the passage of almost four years between the trial period and the completion of the bronze meant that the LCC rejected pleas for a formal unveiling, citing the numerous previous delays to the project.[551] Even William Bull was forced to assent to an informal unveiling after his attempts to cajole the newly crowned King Edward VII into presiding over a ceremony for the statue failed.[552]

But the importance of the popularity of empire or reaction to events in the theatre of empire can easily be overstated as motivations for this most famous of statues

[550] *The Irish Independent*, 18 January 1898.
[551] LCC/MIN/6726 Highway Committee Minutes, 10 June 1902.
[552] LCC/MIN/6329. General Purposes Committee, Presented Papers, 12 June 1902.

of Boudica.[553] The activities of the London County Council and Sir Charles Hercules Read were not motivated by the desire to glorify empire, but rather by genuine curiosity about London and its antiquities. In Sir Charles Read's case, his *pro bono* excavation of the tumulus might be seen as an early effort at public outreach. The erection of the statue was part of the train of events set in motion by the excavation at Hampstead Heath and the publicity generated by that project. Boudica could have done the cultural work of uniting people in celebration of empire, but the relative silence surrounding the arrival in 1902 of the bronze statue that still stands on the site calls into question the argument that events in South Africa were of any importance at all, or that the idea of empire had much bearing on Boudica's, supposedly new, iconicity. The discussion in 1898 – four years before the statue was permanently erected – had been about the artistic merits of the statue and the limitations of its placement. Its arrival in Westminster was a result of the Hampstead Heath excavation and Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebration, and also, crucially, the work of a few men whose interest was in either Boudica as an artistic subject, in Thornycroft's case, or in the beautification of London as a civic centre, in William Bull's. The effort to cast and place Thomas Thornycroft's statue was not a straightforwardly political decision. William Bull was a Conservative, but his desire to celebrate an ancient female pagan seems in contradiction with John Ellis's argument that Conservative party ideas of Britishness were founded on an Anglo-Saxon and Anglican view of the monarchy and parliament.[554] It is possible that Bull's efforts to commemorate Boudica were apolitical;

[553] Warner, *Monuments and maidens*, 50.
[554] J.S. Ellis, "Reconciling the Celt: British national identity, empire, and the 1911 investiture of the Prince of Wales" *Journal of British Studies* (1998) 391-418. See also S. Heathorn, "'The highest type of Englishman: gender, war, and the Alfred the Great commemoration of 1901," *Canadian Journal of History* (2002) 459-484.

they were outside his capacity as MP, at least. His motivations may have been his pride in his own home city of London and a belief that public decoration glorified the place. Boudica was also a fitting representation of support for Queen Victoria, but without being overtly politicised or partisan. Boudica as a patriotic figure who could be venerated beyond the interests of party in the nineteenth century is similar to her position in the eighteenth century.

There was a much more complex dialogue surrounding Boudica's appearance on Westminster Bridge between 1894 and 1902 than has been previously recognised. Much of it points towards Boudica as a quotidian figure whose ability to do cultural work was predicated on her long past and perennial place in historical culture, not on the needs of the present. It would be overly reductionist to assume that because Boudica's public commemoration took place during an age of imperial expansion, she must have been thought of as embodying expansionist, nationalist ideals, to the exclusion of all other possible associations or motivations. The above discussion has shown that the narrative that culminated in the erection of the bronze Boudica statue in Westminster in 1902 does not map easily onto events of national or international importance, at least not in any overt way. Instead, the decision to open the tumulus was the result of local interest in a woman whose actions reverberated through national history, but whose importance was also felt acutely within local communities.

By 1902, London had asserted its association with Boudica by giving pride of place to Thornycroft's monument. But London was only one of three towns named in the ancient accounts of Boudica's uprising. The three Roman colonies said to have been attacked by Boudica's army were Colchester (Camulodunum), St Albans (Verulamium) and London (Londinium). The order in which they were destroyed was usually given as

north to south, following Boudica's movement from her Norfolk homeland to the site of her final battle near London. This was occasionally changed in the accounts current in St Albans, which made Verulamium Boudica's final target. Similar ancient associations led other English towns and localities outside of London to reassert their historic links with Boudica. This was manifested in various ways, notably through Boudica's inclusion in local historical pageants, as well as in public art and civic architecture.

As the inhabitants of what had once been Camulodunum, the people of Colchester saw themselves as intimately associated with Boudica's history. This was demonstrated in the same year that the plaster model of Boudica was undergoing its trial period on Westminster Bridge in London. Dignitaries in Colchester had been debating the possibility of a new Colchester Town Hall for years before they finally chose a design by John Belcher and laid the foundation stone for the building in 1898.[555] It has not been possible to discover exactly how and when the decision was taken to include Boudica as part of the outside decoration of the building, but a statue of Boudica was placed on the West Stockwell Street façade of the building, next to Edward the Elder. She also appeared in a stained glass window donated by the Ladies of Colchester, a committee formed by Mrs. Edwin J. Sanders, the Mayoress of Colchester.[556] The stained glass window was one of a triptych of such windows adorning the Moot Hall, each of which illustrated some aspect of the history of Colchester. The one in which Boudica appeared was dedicated to queens and shows a dignified, even majestic head and shoulder view of Boudica.

[555] W. Marriage and W.G. Benham, *The New Town Hall and municipal buildings for Colchester* (Colchester: Benham & Co., 1900). See also D.T.D. Clarke, *The Town Hall Colchester*. (Colchester: Cultural Activities Committee of the Colchester Borough Council, 1973). For an interpretation of civic ritual in Colchester slightly later, see D. Cannadine, "The transformation of civic ritual in modern Britain: the Colchester Oyster Festival", *Past and Present* (1982) 101-130.
[556] Marriage and Benham, *New Town Hall*, 23.

In addition to being the era in which civic buildings were being constructed as a means of showcasing the local past,[557] the late Victorian and early Edwardian period is also the era in which popular historical pageants came into vogue.[558] Paul Readman has established that local historical pageants were one of the primary means by which local communities gathered together to perform events from their own history. This was something they did of their own accord, challenging once again the idea that history was monopolised and "used" by elites as means of social control.[559] The pageant movement – or "pageantitis" – relied upon popular appeal and often popular participation, with the number of cast members sometimes soaring into the hundreds or even thousands.[560] As one contemporary noted:

> The pageant is the latest and most picturesque development of civic life. One may fairly claim it as a manifestation of all that is best in the new democracy, made possible by the broadening and refining influences of popular education, and successful only so far as it is able to command the aid of all classes of society in the task of setting forth those great deeds of old days which have made our cities what they are.[561]

Pageants soon became ubiquitous, with over forty local pageants held between 1905 and 1914.[562] The subject matter became so predictable that one commentator later noted, "…no pageant would deserve the name without scenes in which Boadicea and her Ancient Britons, the Romans, and Queen Elizabeth might figure."[563] One commentator

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[557] For civic architecture and its significance in the period see I. Morley, *British provincial civic design and the building of Late-Victorian and Edwardian Cities, 1880-1914* (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008); P. Waller. *Town, City, and Nation*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).
[558] A. Yoshino, *The Edwardian Historical Pageant: local history and consumerism* (Tokyo: Waseda University Press, 2010) See also M. Freeman, "'Splendid display; pompous spectacle': historical pageants in twentieth-century Britain" *Social History* (forthcoming).
[559] Readman, "Place of the past", 168-175.
[560] Readman, "Place of the past", 169.
[561] *Manchester Guardian*, 16 July 1907.
[562] D. Sugg Ryan, "'Pageantitis': Frank Lascelles' 1907 Oxford Historical Pageant, visual spectacle and popular memory" *Visual Culture in Britain* 8:2 (2007).
[563] *The Observer*, 28 June 1914.

observed that Boudica was, "…an ubiquitous monarch who has appeared in nearly every pageant throughout the length and breadth of England".[564]

But even if Boudica was a "ubiquitous monarch" in Edwardian pageantry, her role was most evident in pageants staged in localities in whose history she had played an active part. She appeared in the pageant of the west Suffolk town of Bury St Edmunds (west Suffolk having been part of the Iceni dominions) in 1907 as a dignified British commander, whose savagery was acknowledged by the Romans, but whose demeanour and conduct they could not help but respect. [565] Not to be outdone by their neighbours, the people of Colchester staged their own pageant two years later. Citing Boudica's appeal to her countrymen, "Onwards to Camulodunum on the Hill!", from the Bury St Edmunds programme, the Colchester programme stated: "Sainted Edmund's town used her Boadicea in such a way as to suggest that the noble queen would find her "life's fulfilment" on your [Colchester's] classic soil…" This was a way, perhaps, of asserting Colchester's prominence within what was once Iceni territory, while also claiming to be the most significant locale in the famous queen's own life.[566]

Boudica has had less of a presence in St Albans, possibly because she is only said to have destroyed the town, while Colchester was at the centre of her home territories. There are no statues of Boudica in St Albans, nor does she feature in civic architecture. In the present day, there are sections devoted to her in the Verulamium Museum, and she also appears on interpretive displays at the town's Roman ruins. Much earlier, Boudica appeared in the St Albans pageant, held between July 15th and 20th, 1907. Mark Freeman has noted the importance of William Cowper's poem to the

[564] *The Times*. 22 August 1910.
[565] *Bury St Edmunds Pageant, July 8th to 13th, 1907* (Printed by Bury & Norwich Post Co Ltd, 1907)
[566] L.N. Parker, *Souvenir book of words of the Colchester Pageant* (Norwich and London: Jarrold and Sons, 1909)

depiction of the rebellion presented in the 1907 pageant. Freeman asserts that the inclusion of the excerpt "reflected the implicit parallels between Rome and Britain", although, rightly, he does not overemphasise the importance of imperial discourse to the St. Albans pageant of 1907.[567] Instead the emphasis is on St Albans and its importance to the events of the rebellion. According to one souvenir booklet, Boudica's skills as a general allowed her to see the strategic importance of the town. This glorified Boudica's skill as a general, and emphasised St Albans as central to the events of her story:

> It was generalship, not merely desire for plunder, which led Boadicea to post her forces at St. Albans. The capture of St. Albans cut Suetonius's line of communications, left him all the marching to do through a thickly wooded and hostile country, and placed a formidable barrier in his way. With the advantage of perspective that time has given us, it is easy to say that the whole Insurrection was short-sighted and a mistake ... At all events, the very utmost was made of their chances by fighting men and fighting women.[568]

Another souvenir booklet bears a somewhat different interpretation of events. This historical note on the Boudica episode summarises how Boudica took advantage of the absence of General Suetonius Paulinus in Anglesey to lay waste to Camulodunum and Londinium. Afterward, "passing by other places, [Boudica] hastened to Verulamium, being attracted by the riches and importance of the city. The same fate befell it, and over 70,000 persons suffered death and torture in the three places. Suetonius Paulinus avenged this by a decisive victory, in which 80,000 Britons are said to have fallen; Boadicea, to prevent capture, put an end to her life by poison."[569] This writer

[567] M. Freeman, "Splendid display", 12.
[568] "St Albans and its Pageant, being the official souvenir of the pageant held July, 1907, With contributions by the Very Rev. Dean Lawrence, Rev. J.V. Bullard, Mr. C.H. Ashdown, and Mr. W.G. Marshall. The whole arranged by Ernest W. Townson" (London and St Albans: Smiths' Printing Agency, 1907).
[569] "The St Albans Pageant." July 15th to July 20th 1907. Book of the words and lyrics. Text and Lyrics by Charles H. Ashdown", (St Albans: Pageant House, 1907)

emphasised the wealth of the town of Verulamium, but at the expense of Boudica's character.

The link between Boudica and Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk, and her connection with St Albans in Hertfordshire, were not the invention of nineteenth-century elites. This association was circulated as part of Boudica's story from its very beginning in Tacitus and Cassius Dio. Local historical accounts had long served the purpose of foregrounding small communities against the panoramic backdrop of the national story.[570] Asserting a locality's direct role in the life of historic hero simultaneously asserted the importance of local area to the national story. King Alfred's millenary in Winchester is but one example of this on which both Heathorn and Readman have focused. [571] But Alfred's celebration differs from the veneration of Boudica in Colchester. According to Heathorn, King Alfred's statue in Winchester was erected to celebrate the man himself, with the attendant effect being the glorification of Winchester in the national story. But Boudica's status in Colchester was somewhat different, given the fact that she was responsible for destroying it. It would have been difficult to celebrate Boudica as an exemplar – the highest type of Englishwoman – but this did not diminish her utility as a representative of the antiquity of a place.

In one souvenir booklet for the St Albans pageant, the commentator noted that Boudica's rebellion was, "British, almost English, in the combination of courageous pluck, cool judgment, and contempt of odds" which characterised it.[572] Here the commentator made a distinction between Boudica as a Briton and Boudica as an Englishwoman. This writer was not alone in seeing Boudica's Englishness as a point of

[570] For a study of local historical writing see R. Sweet, *The writing of urban histories in eighteenth-century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
[571] Heathorn, "'The highest type of Englishman"; Readman, "Place of the past", 151-155.
[572] "St Alban and its pageant", 1907.

contention. Many Welshmen in the Victorian period (and before) were suspicious, even contemptuous, of the idea that Boudica, an ancient Briton, could be called an English heroine. In this section, I will focus attention on the matter of Boudica's competing Welsh and English identities, and her appearance in histories, poems, sculpture, and even elaborate tableware that demonstrate the contentious nature of her identity in the period. From this discussion, we will begin to make some speculative conclusions about the importance of historical culture, particularly when seen in the *longue durée*, to ideas of national identity in Britain.

Part III. "Boadicea Rediviva": Boudica in Victorian Wales

Paul Readman has noted that "historic continuity functioned as an essential repository – perhaps *the* essential repository – of English (or British) conceptions of nationhood" in the period before 1914, an argument that he rightly believes has not been made forcefully enough by historians.[573] Unfortunately, Readman failed to problematize his view of the "English" past, but his broader conclusion is informative. When reaching back far enough in history, we encounter a time before England, and it was during this period that Boudica flourished. Hence her association with Wales is only fully visible if we understand her story from its earliest stages. Lacking an immersion in both the earlier aspects of Boudica's story and her particular nineteenth-century iteration, neither historians nor literary scholars have fully explored Boudica's relationship to Welsh history or to Welsh national identity.

For one very obvious reason, Boudica's place in Welsh history was very different to her place in the histories of London, Colchester, and St Albans. Boudica's

[573] P. Readman, "The place of the past", 198. See also B. Melman. "Claiming the nation's past: The invention of an Anglo-Saxon Tradition", *Journal of Contemporary History* (1991) 575-595.

association with Colchester and St Albans was founded on the knowledge that Boudica's Iceni tribe inhabited the area of Norfolk and travelled south to St Albans, thus providing a firm geographical, not to mention historical, basis for her celebration in those localities. No such basis existed in the Welsh case, and any association that Boudica had with the place had to be established by some means other than well-known history. But Boudica's Welshness was not an outright invention. Again, it corresponded with a firmly authentic view of ancient British history as belonging to the Welsh. In a sense, all of England had once been Wales – at least, that was the argument put forward by Welsh cultural nationalists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Boudica illustrated Welsh exceptionalism by asserting the principality's significance to British history.

By far the most significant aspect of Boudica's place in Welsh history in the nineteenth century was the result of her name. We have seen that Boudica's name has been the cause of some confusion, but some of this confusion was particular to her afterlife in Wales. The 21st and 22nd Welsh Triads, a collection of ancient Welsh poetry, referred to a woman known as "Aregwedd Voeddig", said to be the daughter of Avarwy.[574] But this Aregwedd Voeddig was later said to be "the Cartismandua and the Boadicea of the Romans."[575] One queen became three queens in one. William Owen, combined the two queens, Cartismandua and Boudica, in his entry for "Aregwedd Voeddig" in the *Cambrian Biography* (1803) and confuses the matter even further by including a separate entry for "Boadicea", but not one for Cartismandua. His entry for "Aregwedd Voeddig" mentions Cartismandua/Boadicea's treachery, while the

[574] B.B. Woodward, *The history of Wales from the earliest times to its final incorporation with the kingdom of England* (London: Virtue and Co., 1853) 63.
[575] W. Owen, *The Cambrian biography or historical notes of the celebrated men among the ancient Britons* (London: E. Williams, 1803) 11.

individual entry for "Boadicea" states that she was, "the celebrated British heroine, who caused her countrymen to revolt, and led them to battle against the Romans, wherein she perished, amidst a dreadful slaughter of her forces, AD 60. See Aregwedd Voeddig".[576] Writing in 1854, T.J.L. Prichard took a firm laudatory line when he made the claim that Boudica was indeed originally called "Aregwedd Voeddawg" but that she was granted the name "Buddug" or "Victory" by her grateful countrymen after her initial triumph against the Romans in Camulodonum and Verulamium. He indignantly denied William Owen's assertion that Boudica, the heroine, and Cartismandua, the villain, could possibly have been the same person.[577] Despite some confusion between Cartismandua and Aregwedd Voedigg, Boudica was for the most part acknowledged as "Buddug", a name which, crucially, translates to "Victory" in English. This, according to some nineteenth-century Welshmen, made Queen Victoria the second of that name.

The nominal link between Boudica and Victoria could easily be mistaken for an "invented tradition", but Boudica made her first appearance in a Welsh history as "Buddug" in *Drych y prif oesoedd* or *The Mirror of Past Ages* (also sometimes translated as *The Mirror of Primitive Ages*) in 1716. This history of Wales was written by the 23-year-old Theophilus Evans (1693-1767). Its publication was an important event in the modern story of Welsh history-writing. Evans was an Anglican clergyman with an enthusiasm for Wales and Welshness, and his was the first history to be written in the Welsh tongue for centuries. *Drych y prif oesoedd* ran to five editions before the close of the eighteenth century, with a further sixteen in the nineteenth century, making it the most popular history book in Welsh before 1900.[578] It was first printed in

[576] Owen, *Cambrian biography*, 25.
[577] T.J.L. Prichard, *Heroines of Welsh history* (London: W. and F.G. Cash, 1854) 86.
[578] G. H. Jenkins, *The foundation of modern Wales, 1642-1780* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) 248.

Shrewsbury, the capital of Welsh-language printing in the early eighteenth century, by John Rhydderch. Like Evans, Rhydderch was passionate about the Welsh language and his printing enterprise was designed to bring Welsh poetry and history to an expanding audience of Welsh speakers.[579] But the English language was increasing its hold among the Welsh gentry throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and those who produced literature in the Welsh tongue were fighting against an inexorably rising tide.[580] Nonetheless, Evans's history "exercised an extraordinary influence on the ordinary Welshman's view of his nation's past."[581] No doubt it is significant that it is in such an influential work that we first encounter Boudica in her Welsh form. Evans coined the name "Buddug" and she is still sometimes known by that name in Wales today.

The debate about "Aregwedd Voeddig," while centred around one of the most notorious British heroines, was peculiar to Welsh commentators and was not referred to in the majority of commentary written about her elsewhere. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Boudica's perceived association with Wales was not commented on by Englishmen generally, and those who did know of it were keen to demonstrate this titbit of cultural crossover for the benefit of the ignorant Englishmen. The noted feminist campaigner Frances Power Cobbe suspected that her English counterparts were unaware of the explicit link between the current Queen Victoria and the ancient Queen Boudica. Then sharing a home with the Welsh woman Mary Lloyd in North Wales, Cobbe sent a £5 contribution to William Bull's Boadicea Fund Committee, along with a letter in which she wrote: "A fact, possibly not known to you, adds, I think, a little to the interest of

[579] Jenkins, *Foundation* 216.
[580] Jenkins, *Foundation*, 219.
[581] Ibid.

your appeal on behalf of the statue of Boadicea. The British name which the Romans would have Latinized into Boadicea would undoubtedly have been the Welsh "Buddig" (pronounced 'Bythig'). The meaning of the name is 'Victoria.'"[582]

The earliest explicit reference to Boudica and Victoria as namesakes occurred much earlier, in 1853 at the Welsh National Eisteddfod, held in Abergavenny. John Williams ab Ithel proclaimed, "Victoria is peculiarly our Queen – Boadicea rediviva – our Buddug the Second … We can address our English friends: 'We have … more right in Victoria than thee', a larger quantity of Celtic than of Saxon blood flowing through her royal veins."[583] It was no great leap to draw a connection between two reigning queens: one at the beginning of history and one in the glorious present; the first the prophecy and the second the fulfilment. This nominal connection was grounded in Welsh history, and was promoted almost exclusively by Welshmen. This honour was not reserved for the queen only; it extended to another royal Victoria. When Victoria's daughter, Princess Victoria, visited the National Eisteddfod in Caernarfon in 1894, she was honoured with the name "Buddug Boadicea" by her hosts.[584]

Because the Buddug/Victoria coincidence was predicated on the translation of a Welsh word, it allowed Welsh commentators to use the character of Boudica to celebrate the exceptional place of Wales in British history, while simultaneously asserting loyalty to Queen Victoria. Indeed, Boudica was far more likely to be used as an assertion of Welshness in friendly opposition to Englishness than she was to be part of a narrative of Welsh history. Boudica could signify a link between England and

[582] LCC/MIN/6324, 25 January 1897.
[583] J. Davies, "Victoria and Victorian Wales", in G. H. Jenkins and J. B. Smith (eds), *Politics and Society in Wales, 1840-1922. Essays in Honour of Ieuan Gwynedd Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988) 14.
[584] *Western Mail*, 12 July 1894.

Wales, while also presenting a narrative of queenship with uniquely Welsh roots. One example of this from 1858 is "A Poem of English Sympathy with Wales", presented at the National Eisteddfod in Llangollen:

> The Roman came, and saw, but conquered not
> Till Fraud and Discord had oppressed the land,
> And Luxury fortified the spot
> Where brave Caswallon took his earliest stand,
> Or reared a *city* where Cynfelyn planned
> A *camp*, but sternly on that city fell
> Victoria's*[585] curse and red avenging hand-
> Vain the doomed Legion this last shock to quell
> Colonia Victrix <Camalodunum> sank, dirged by the conquerors yell!
> There rose, alas! the tide of blood and turned
> Back on the hapless Princess; utter woe
> Consumed her, but the heroic heart that spurned
> Forlorn and crownless life, and Roman show,
> Lived yet again and laid the Armada low,
> Spurning for Tudor England threats and chains-
> Lives quenchless yet, and may it quenchless glow
> In her, our new Victoria, who reigns
> Invincible and free o'er ancient hills and plains![586]

In the poem, Boudica acted as grounds both of reconciliation between Welsh and English, as well as a means of asserting a distinction between the two.

Prominent Welshmen claimed Boudica in very public ways for Wales, with at least one of these instances being for the benefit of the royal family. This occurred in 1893, when Boudica's place in the narrative of British history became part of an overt gesture of loyalty to the monarchy on the part of the Welsh. When it was announced in that year that the Duke of York, the future George V, would marry Princess Victoria Mary of Teck, the Welsh National Presentation Committee was formed for the purpose of arranging a suitable gift for the occasion. The gift was to be presented to the couple

[585] The asterisk alerts the reader to a note on the alternative spellings "*Boadicea (Vuddig)".
[586] Elfynydd. "A poem of English sympathy with Wales, written for the Great National Eisteddfod of 1858 and Llangollen, a Poem, upon the same occasion." (Birmingham: Joseph Allen and Son, 1858.)

from the people of Wales. The chairman and treasurer of this Committee was one of the most eminent Welshmen in late nineteenth-century London, Sir David Evans (1849-1907). David Evans had served as Lord Mayor of London in 1890. He was one of very few Welshmen to hold the office and, at only 42, he was among the youngest Lord Mayors in the City's history. David Evans's patriotic stance on his homeland was widely recognized by his Welsh compatriots, as well as by the English establishment. As a resident of both Wales and England, Evans's love of country was said to be "of a sterling type, not that pseudo-patriotism of the Welsh nationalist sort...Sir David Evans is, in every sense, a most worthy son of Wales..."[587] Evans was made a Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George in 1892.[588]

David Evans was assisted by the Honorary Secretary of the National Presentation Committee, Sir Evan Vincent Evans (1851-1934), another well-known figure in both London and Wales.[589] This (unrelated) Evans had many business and political links in London, having come to the city in 1872 from the small village of Trawsfynydd, in Gwynedd. He forged a lifelong friendship with David Lloyd George, and devoted much of his life to the advancement of Welshmen in London, as well as supporting Welsh cultural initiatives within Wales. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the revived Eisteddfodau movement. He was also the Secretary of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion from 1886. As a man with strong links to both England and

[587] *Western Mail*, 1 August 1892.
[588] Ibid.
[589] *Bye-Gones*, 27 December 1893.

Wales, as well as a reputation as an efficient organiser, his support was much sought after by scholars, politicians, and charitable associations alike.[590]

After collecting subscriptions from Welsh Londoners, as well as from people in Wales, the National Presentation Committee finally commissioned a gift in the form of a large boat-shaped centrepiece cast from silver, silver gilt, gold, and enamel (see Figure 17). Flanked by two equestrian figures (one of Henry V and the other George's father, the future Edward VII, then Prince of Wales) the central portion of the centrepiece was decorated with gold reliefs depicting scenes from Welsh geography and history. Between a scene of Gerald the Welshman (the twelfth century writer) and one of Raglan Castle is "Queen Boadicea Repelling the Romans AD61". The rendering was fairly conventional, and showed Boudica atop her chariot, urging her troops onward amidst a scene busy with horses, soldiers, and spear points. Its inclusion is far more striking than its unoriginal imagery, which bears a resemblance to many other images of Boudica and her army. Significantly, there were no other scenes illustrating ancient Britain, and even Caractacus was excluded in favour of Boudica as sole representative of ancient Wales (and Britain). In this instance, Boudica's dual Englishness and Welshness worked in her favour. Caractacus, king of the Silures, was more overtly and exclusively Welsh and would have borne less meaning as part of an object intended to illustrate the shared history of England and Wales.

But there was a reticence to include Boudica in a history of Wales intended to promote an idea of the past separate from the English one. If the intended audience was Welsh, Boudica could easily be forsaken as English. This was evident in two new

[590] T. Jones, "Evans, Evan (later Sir Evan Vincent Evans)" *Welsh Dictionary of National Biography*. Online edition. (National Museum of Wales, 2009) [http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-EVAN-VIN-1851.html] Accessed 14 October 2012.

histories of Wales written by O.M. Edwards (1858-1920) in 1901 and 1906.[591] In both works Edwards described the events surrounding Boudica's rebellion, such as the massacre of the Druids in Mona, the collapse of the statue of the goddess Victory in Camulodunum and the destruction of the city of London. Yet he did not see fit to make any mention of Boudica throughout his record of events, a startling omission considering she was otherwise universally acknowledged as the commander-in-chief of the mutinous British tribes. Rather than relate Boudica's place in Welsh history, Edwards, who was certainly aware of Boudica, chose to write her out of his Welsh history. Instead he focused his attention on Caractacus, king of the Silures.

Owen Rhoscomyl (1863-1919)[592] showed a similar disregard for Boudica in his work. Rhoscomyl was one of the architects of the National Pageant of Wales in 1909, as well as the author of a number of novels and histories. His real name was Robert Scourfield Mills, but he also called himself Arthur Owen Vaughan. He held a highly romanticised view of Welsh history which had been enriched by the stories told to him by his Welsh grandmother in his youth. He had been raised for a time in Lancashire, but went to live with his grandmother in Tremeirchion at the age of six, after the death of his mother. What little is known of Rhoscomyl's early life is full of intrepidity and adventure, and served as inspiration for his novels: he crossed the Atlantic to South America, was a cowboy in the North American wild west, fought with Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders in Cuba, and then went to South Africa to fight in the Boer

[591] O. M. Edwards, *Wales* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1901) 20-21. See also, O. M. Edwards, *A Short History of Wales* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1906). For Edwards's life see R. T. Jenkins, "Edwards, Sir Owen Morgan, 1858-1920", *Welsh Dictionary of National Biography*. Online edition. (National Library of Wales, 2009) [http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s-EDWA-MOR-1858.html]. Accessed 15 November 2012. Also G. E. Jones. 'Edwards, Sir Owen Morgan (1858–1920)', *ODNB*. (Oxford University Press, 2004). [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32984, accessed 26 Nov 2012]

[592] There has yet to be a full biography of Rhoscomyl, but see H. T. Edwards, *The National Pageant of Wales* (Llandysul, Ceredigion: Gomer Press, 2009.) pp. 29 ff.

War. Eventually, Rhoscomyl returned to his grandmother's native Wales and enthusiastically began to promote a nationalistic view of Welsh history. He published his own history of Wales under the title *Flame-bearers of Welsh History* (1905), and it is in this work that we find his opinion of Boudica, which he stated explicitly:

> Boudicca, the widow of the King of the Eceni (whose name, anciently distorted into Boadicea, you see in a famous poem [by Cowper]) roused the revolt… So the struggle went on. Prince after prince, people after people, come to the front in the desperate struggle against Rome. But as the descendents of the people Boudicca roused are now part of the English people, their deeds do not come into this book in detail.[593]

This explains why Rhoscomyl did not include Boudica in his script for the National Pageant of Wales in 1909. Ancient Welsh history was instead personified by Caractacus and his Silures, the opposite of what had been the case in the 1893 wedding gift to the future George V. Similarly, the 1913 Pageant of Gwent used Caractacus (or Caradoc, as he was usually known in Wales) to illustrate the early history of Wales, and there was no mention of Boudica at all.[594]

Boudica's position in Wales was somewhat different than it was in Colchester and St Albans. As we saw in the case of the Colchester and St Albans pageants, Boudica played an active part in marking local historical identity by representing the earliest history of the two towns, and signifying the relevance of each in the British national narrative for the benefit of the participants and an audience of locals. However, Boudica's importance in Wales was different in that there was a tension between her Welsh identity and her English one, in addition to her ancient identity as a "Briton". Many commentators were conscious of this tension between her local and national

[593] O. Rhoscomyl, *Flame-bearers of Welsh history* (Merthyr Tydil: The Welsh Educational Publishing Co., 1905) 24.
[594] *Book of the Pageant of Gwent* (Abergavenny: Owen Brothers, 1913).

identities; it was a tension that did not exist for people in Colchester or St Albans, both of which were unassailably and unproblematically English. For O.M. Edwards and Owen Rhoscomyl, Boudica was far too integrated into an English view of the past for her to fit comfortably in a history of Wales for a Welsh audience.

There were others who thought Boudica was wholly and entirely Welsh and had simply been stolen by the English. "Griffith," an anonymous correspondent to the *Western Mail* who later published many of his letters under the title *The Welsh Question and Druidism* (1887), concluded that Boudica could not have been Queen of the Norfolk-based Iceni because such a small district could not possibly have supplied the 230,000 men which the Roman sources purported to have made up Boudica's rebellious troop. "The improbabilities of the whole story are enormous; we are told that these Britons were infuriated, and had already slaughtered 70,000 Romans, that they had swept the country from Anglesea to Colchester; but when Suetonius, who had only 10,000 men, attacked the infuriated army of 230,000, they slew 80,000 Britons, with the loss of 400 Romans only. If this be not a cooked account, we never saw one; yet such, as a rule, are the accounts we find in Roman and English Histories, when speaking of the Britons and the Welsh."[595]

By far Boudica's most enthusiastic promoter in Wales was Owen "Morien" Morgan (1836-1921). Similarly to Owen Rhoscomyl, Morien was immersed in a romantic and somewhat sensationalist view of Welsh history heavily influenced by Edward Williams (1747-1826). Williams had been more widely known by his self-granted Bardic name, Iolo Morganwg.[596] Morganwg had done much to revive the sense

[595] "Griffith", *The Welsh question and Druidism* (London: Robert Banks & Son: 1887) 105.
[596] There has been a flurry of recent scholarship about Iolo Morganwg, but there is little biographical information for Morien. For Iolo Morganwe, see P. Morgan, *Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff: University of

that Wales had a mystical past with deep associations with Druid rites and sacred antiquity. His literary forgeries and picturesque reimagining of the *gorsedd* ceremony had yielded tangible results in the revivification of the eisteddfod movement in the last decade of the eighteenth century.[597] The first new national eisteddfod, as opposed to the older local ones, took place in 1861 and was heavily indebted to Morganwg's possibly laudanum-inspired teachings.[598] After Morganwg's death, it was up to Morien and his compatriots to maintain and promote Morganwg's view of the Welsh nation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Morien himself took the title of "Archdruid" after the death of his friend Evan Davies aka Myfyr Morganwg (1801-1888), who previously held the title. Davies had himself inherited it from Iolo Morganwg's son Taliesen Williams (1787-1847). Morien was at the forefront of Welsh historical and cultural nationalism, but unlike Owen Rhoscomyl, Morien saw Boudica, not as an English heroine, but as a Welsh heroine stolen by the English. "It is true," wrote Morien, taking on the imagined voice of one of his English counterparts, "that Caractacus, Arviragus, &c., were Welshmen; that the heroic Boadicea was a Welshwoman. You don't mind our referring to them occasionally as Englishmen, and to Boadicea as an Englishwoman? We do not want to lay claim to Queen Cartismandua, who betrayed General Caractacus? You shall refer to her exclusively as a Welshwoman.'"[599]

Wales Press, 1975); G.H. Jenkins, *A rattleskull genius: the many faces of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005); M. Loffler, *The literary and historical legacy of Iolo Morganwg 1826–1926* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007).

[597] Smith discusses the significance of the eisteddfod and uses it as evidence against the "invented tradition" paradigm. See *The Nation in History*, 55. See also P. Morgan, "From a death to a view: the hunt for the Welsh past in the romantic period" in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, *The invention of tradition*.

[598] H.T. Edwards, *The Eisteddfod* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1990).

[599] *Western Mail*, 10 July 1891.

Griffith had implied that Boudica was the victim of "cooked accounts" by Roman and English writers. Morien's own view was that Boudica was unfairly claimed by the English, and her true place was among her Welsh countrymen. Both Griffith and Morien shared a common desire to historicise and authenticate Boudica's geographical connection to Wales. Morien asserted this link in his history of ancient Druidism, *The Light of Britannia* (1893). First, Morien made Boudica a heroine of the modern-day Druid movement in Wales, in which he was a leading figure. *The Light of Britannia* was dedicated to:

> ...the sacred memory of those of our ancestors, who, a vast multitude of aged and young Druids and Druidesses, were massacred in A.D. 61, on the Mona side of the Menai Straights [sic], by the Roman legions under the command of General Paulinus Suetonius. ... The slaughter of the British priests and priestesses, all of whom were non-combatants, was, however, speedily avenged, for the British nation uprose in arms and slew scores of thousands of the Romans, and, commanded by Queen Victoria I. (Buddug – Boadicea), marched, with fire in their eyes, towards Mona.

The Druids, Morien claimed, were direct ancestors of nineteenth-century Britons or Welshmen, who were themselves commanded by another Queen Victoria. Morien continued: "At New Market, Flintshire, the British and Roman armies met in deadly conflict. According to Tacitus, who erroneously describes the scene of battle as near London, the Britons were eventually defeated in the battle. That Queen Victoria I perished seems certain, for her grave is still shown near the said New Market, in the midst of many a heap of bones of warriors slain."[600]

Morien consolidated his thoughts on the subject in the pamphlet *Queen Boadicea: Her Life, Battles, and Death Near Rhyl* published in 1913. It was his more

[600] O. Morgan (B.B.D.) (Morien), "Dedication," *The light of Britannia: the mysteries of ancient Druidism revealed* (Cardiff: Daniel Owen & Co., Limited, 1893). Morien would repeat this in, O. Morgan, *A history of Wales from the earliest period* (Liverpool: Edward Howell, 1911)

forceful assertion of Boudica's geographical link to Wales. Morien argued that Boudica's final stand had taken place not near London, as previous writers had stated, but rather near Rhyl in the county of Flintshire in the indisputably Welsh north of Wales. He went on to present a mass of evidence for this contention. He conjectured that after she had put down what little resistance there was in the Roman colonial towns, Boudica intended to intercept the bulk of the Roman forces as they returned from their mission to exterminate the Druids on Mona. In order to achieve this end, she would have turned her army northwestward and ridden at full speed toward present-day Chester. There was, Morien went on to state, evidence of Boudica's presence in the area in the place names around Flintshire. He asserted that the hill called Bryn Sion had been considered sacred long before the introduction of Christianity to north Wales and the biblical name was a legacy to its sanctity as the spot where the great woman had finally fallen. A golden torque had been found there in 1816 by a miner working in a limestone quarry and this had also, according to Morien, come to be associated with Boudica.[601] I have found no mention of the torque outside Morien's work, but Morien was convinced it had belonged to the queen or one of her daughters and that it had been lost and trampled into the ground in the melee.

Again, according to Morien, the road near the Bryn Sion was known locally as "The Road that is Harrowed." He argued that this was because Boudica's forces had attacked and "harrowed" the Romans as they marched along the road toward England. Most telling, he said, was the stone monolith Maen Achwynfan or the "Stone of Lamentation" that stood close to the road. According to Morien's investigation, the stone was also known to locals as the Careg Bedd Buddug, a name he translated as

[601] *Western Mail*, 6 September 1892.

"Boadicea's Gravestone". This, he thought, was definitive proof that Boudica had died somewhere in the area. He believed that the queen and her daughters, the princesses, had been wounded near the Maen Achwynfan and were moved to a nearby cottage where they succumbed to their wounds. Finally, "when dead, the three Royal ladies were taken from the cottage and placed on the green sward, then lovingly covered over, and finally hidden underneath the soil of Wales, drenched with the blood of brave men."[602] Morien had argued many years before that the supposed "grave" in Hampstead Heath excavated by Sir Charles Read was not Boudica's tomb but rather a Druidic "pulpit" from which the religious leaders would have offered prayers to the heavens.[603] Morien insisted that the ancient queen's true resting place was in north Wales. Morien's account has Boudica and her two children literally subsumed under the sacred Welsh soil, under the land where her people - past and present - dwelled.

This was all pure conjecture on Morien's part, though not uninformed conjecture. The Maen Achwynfan had stood on the spot for centuries; it had been the subject of speculation by Thomas Pennant in *The history of the parishes of Whiteford and Holywell*, although that author made no mention of Boudica and suspected that the monument was of Christian origin.[604] Watkin Williams made an illustration of the Maen Achwynfan in 1759 for Sir Roger Mostyn, the owner of the property on which it sat, but there was no mention of a link to the ancient queen. Morien had only the slimmest factual basis for his story, but it was crucial for him to establish that his own account was at least plausible. Rather than "inventing" a Welsh past for Boudica, Morien

[602] O. Morgan (Morien), *Boadicea: her life, battles, and death near Rhyl* (Pontypridd: 1913).
[603] *Western Mail*, 1 December 1894
[604] T. Pennant, *The history of the parishes of Whiteford and Holywell* (London: 1796)

reinterpreted existing evidence and "corrected" misinformed conclusions. Whether the Archdruid himself believed his own arguments is a matter for conjecture.

The more pertinent question is why Morien chose Boudica as the subject for his research and as a vehicle for his views on Welsh relations with England. The answer is that no other historical person could have done the same work as Boudica: Caractacus, as we have seen, was too Welsh; King Alfred was much too English. King Arthur was widely accepted as a fiction and did not carry the legitimacy of "authentic" history.[605] But Boudica was chronologically British (or Welsh), geographically English (according to most accounts), and carried the additional gravitas of being Queen Victoria I. Morien was wholly in favour of Welsh national pride, but he was not a separatist. Elsewhere he stated, somewhat implausibly, "England and Wales mutually agreed to the union of the two countries, and the union will ever continue to respect the proud national spirit of the Welsh people."[606] Boudica's story was a source for cultural conciliation and internal unity through diversity, as one historian has described the Prince of Wales Investiture Ceremony.[607] It was precisely because Boudica's identity was contested that she was a heroine capable of being venerated for both her Welshness and her Englishness. As Morien himself put it, "we are all Britons now,"[608] and he was perfectly willing to share his heroine with the English, providing the English showed equal magnanimity.

There was one final tribute to Boudica in Wales, the most enduring of them all: John Havard Thomas's statue in Cardiff City Hall (see Figure 18). Cardiff City Hall, although intended as a local authority building, was constructed in 1906 with the

[605] On the fate of Arthur, Brutus, and the Galfradian history before 1800, see R. Mayer, *History and the early English novel*, 34-53.
[606] Quoted in Edwards, *National Pageant of Wales*, 59.
[607] J.S. Ellis, "Reconciling the Celt: British national identity, empire, and the 1911 investiture of the Prince of Wales" *Journal of British Studies* (1998) 391-418.
[608] Morien, *Queen Boadicea*, 15.

attendant purpose of locating a national centre.[609] The grandeur of the building's architecture was matched by its interior design. The Marble Hall, resplendent with plush red carpeting and creamy gossamer wall hangings, was conceived of as a "national Valhalla for Wales" in which the heroes of Welsh history would be immortalised in marble.[610] Toward this end, the sculptor John Havard Thomas, RA (1854-1921), best known for his controversial "Lycidas" of 1905, was brought in from the Royal Academy in London to oversee this spatial and material recreation of Welsh national history through ten (later eleven) heroic individuals.[611]

After a public vote, the result of which determined a shortlist of candidates to be housed in the new Welsh Valhalla, a panel of three judges made the final decision. The subjects chosen for inclusion were for the most part unsurprising: St. David, Hywel the Good, Llewelyn ap Grufydd, Owain Glyn Dŵr, and Harri Tewdwr (Henry VII) were all granted a place in the Marble Hall, along with some more recent heroes of the Welsh nonconformist movement. At some point in the proceedings, it was decided that the Welsh Valhalla should house at least one woman and two close contenders emerged: Ann Griffiths (1776-1805), the poet and hymn writer, and Boudica.[612] Boudica received very few votes in the national competition.[613] However, the Committee intervened and chose the ancient queen to occupy the eleventh plinth, which had been added in order to balance out the positioning of the statues in the Hall. The statue of "Buddug/Boadicea" was the work of John Havard Thomas himself. Havard Thomas had shown some

[609] P. Lord, *Imaging the nation: the visual culture of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998-2003) 337.
[610] A. Gaffney, "A National Valhalla for Wales: D.A. Thomas and the Welsh Historical Sculpture Scheme", *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1999) 131-144.
[611] D. J. Getsy, "Lycidas" in D. J. Getsy (ed). *Sculpture and the pursuit of a modern ideal in Britain, c. 1880-1930* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2004).
[612] Lord, *Imaging the nation*, 337.
[613] Gaffney, "National Valhalla for Wales", 139.

previous interest in Boudica as a subject for his work. When he was only 20 years old, Havard Thomas, a native of Bristol, won the £15 15s prize in the 1874 Bangor Eisteddfod for a plaster bas relief of "Boadicea at the head of her army".[614] In 1916, Havard Thomas returned to the subject that had, it seems, captured his youthful imagination. His 1916 addition to the Cardiff City Hall scheme might have been the culmination of his personal artistic investment in Boudica as a subject. It may also have been the influence of D.A. Thomas, Lord Rhondda, the coal baron and principal financial backer for the project, who had insisted that Havard Thomas contribute a statue to the Marble Hall pantheon. Havard Thomas had initially refused, noting his position as assessor, but eventually acquiesced to his benefactor's request. Havard Thomas's Boudica was duly unveiled by then Secretary of State for War, David Lloyd Geroge in October 1916. According to a posthumous review, the group was "only respectable."[615]

For our purposes, it is impossible to overlook the fact that Boudica's appearance in the Marble Hall was the work of a few powerful individuals, not the result of a critical mass of collective emotional investment prevailing across Welsh society as a whole. Boudica did not receive the backing of the people in the public vote. We could read this as an instance of "invented tradition". That is, we could see this as a small number of members of an "elite" foisting a fiction onto an audience of passive spectators for the purpose of instilling internal unity. But Anthony Smith has argued that what he defines as an "authentic" past was a necessary part of forging national identity. Smith argued that that past was constructed by "nationalist" historians and

[614] *The Bristol Mercury*, 29 August 1874.
[615] *The Manchester Guardian*, 25 April 1922.

archaeologists.[616] I agree with Smith's view that the past's perceived "authenticity" is crucial if it is to play any role at all in lives lived in the present, but the second aspect of his argument is more questionable if one accepts that the public can actively engage in the reproduction and circulation of the past in Britain. The statue of Boudica in Cardiff was no more the result of wholesale invention than the public celebrations we saw in East Anglia and St Albans, which drew on the classical histories, as well as on the embellishments provided by William Cowper and others. The evidence for Boudica's presence in Wales existed, at least in some minds, and the commentator Morien did all he could to circulate his ideas on the subject. Morien was undoubtedly a Welsh enthusiast, but he was not an historian or archaeologist – in fact, he had no professional qualifications for proving Boudica's association with Wales at all. As the holder of such a view of national history, all Morien required was some knowledge of British antiquity, and of the tension between the Welsh/British past and the English/Anglo-Saxon present – a knowledge that, perhaps, was not widespread or considered in any great depth, but which was nonetheless present and important. By choosing Boudica as a representative of Welshness, the designers of the Marble Hall scheme were not, arguably, attempting to foist a fictionalised version of her on to a Welsh audience, but rather were asserting the primacy of a fact – the fact that Boudica was a Briton – against what they saw as the prejudice of an Anglicised British history and antiquity. The audience for that assertion was an English one, and the Welsh public, in whose name the statue was placed, did not engage with Boudica in that way. If this could be cited as an "invented tradition", then it was a failed one; or, as Smith has put it, "the fabrication and single-handed initiation of

[616] Smith, *Nation in History*, 64. Wales is an interesting case study from this point of view. Anthony Smith uses the Welsh Eisteddfod as an example of an "invented tradition" that in fact corresponded closely to its historic original. Smith, *Nation in history*, 55. See also the discussion of "historical authenticity" in A. Smith, *The antiquity of nations* (London: Polity, 2004) 86-90.

national traditions and national history as crucial components of nationhood" is a vanishingly rare occurrence.[617] This example only demonstrates the extent to which national histories, unlike fictions, must be perceived as authentic in order to be accepted.

Part IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how Boudica's story was commemorated in statues and interpreted in discrete local communities. The statues by John Thomas and Pierre Verheyden show her in a very different light to the publically commemorative ones in London, Colchester, and Cardiff. Verheyden placed her in a long line of female leadership in homage to Victoria. John Thomas's was a private commission by an eminent man whose interest in the queen might have been piqued by his involvement in rebuilding the Houses of Parliament as a showcase of British history – albeit a heavily Anglo-Saxon version.

Boudica was also intimately bound to town and local history in London, St Albans, and East Anglia. Paradoxically, this was because she was purported to have destroyed them. The moment of Boudica's rebellion against the mighty Roman empire was a climactic one in British history, and to be associated with it was to be at the forefront of history. The pageants in Colchester and St Albans affirmed the importance of their towns by emphasising Boudica's actions there. In London, it was the result of local effort that led to Thornycroft's statue being placed on Westminster Bridge. The statue commemorated the relationship between Boudica and Victoria, and between Boudica and London. The chain of events which began with the London County

[617] Smith, *Antiquity of nations*, 89.

Council's decision to open the tumulus on Hampstead Heath, the press coverage which ensued, and the devotion shown by J.I. Thornycroft and William Bull, are what led to the statue's erection. To argue that imperial enthusiasm was the first or only spur to such the undertaking is to undermine the importance of individual action and local effort.

Boudica's importance in Wales, or at least to a particularly Welsh view of the ancient past, has never been fully related before. Because of her chronological position at the beginning of British history – a time before England – Boudica could never be an unproblematic English heroine, nor could she represent English identity without calling into question the age of England as a place. Boudica's national identity was simultaneously British, English, and Welsh. This can only be revealed by seeing the idea of identity in the *longue durée*. Paul Readman has argued that "Englishness rested on a diffuse, multifaceted, but very strong sense of historical continuity."[618] But just how far back can continuity be traced? Anthony Smith has argued that scholars of nations and nationalism should view their subjects over a long time span in order to reveal the premodern antecedents of the present.[619] I would further argue that by doing so in the British case, we recover a state of premodernity that problematises understandings of the present. By tracing how the national past was circulated and understood in Britain over a long period, we are forced to question which nation it is that we are discussing. This was something which Welsh commentators understood and exploited in Boudica's case. By (re)appropriating her for the Welsh historical narrative and attempting to authenticate her as a Welsh heroine, writers like Morien were asserting the separate but equal status of Welsh history and, by extension, identity.

[618] Readman, "Place of the past", 197.
[619] Smith, *Nation in history*, 63-65.

Conclusion

The love of history seems inseparable from human nature, because it seems inseparable from self-love – Bolingbroke, *Letters on the study and use of history*.[620]

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), one of the great spokesmen of his time, once opined of the 15th-century Boethius, "His history is written with elegance and vigour, but his fabulousness and credulity are justly blamed… but his credulity may be excused in an age, when all men were credulous… The first race of scholars…were, for the most part, learning to speak, rather than to think, and were therefore more studious of elegance than of truth…The examination of tenets and of facts was reserved for another generation."[621] Johnson here exhibits a singular variant of condescension – one reserved, it seems, for posterity's view of its predecessors. Such condescension could just as easily be exhibited by a professional historian in the twenty-first century against a historical writer in the seventeenth century, or even one from Johnson's generation. Our historian might argue that, blinded as they were by political, religious, or ideological bias, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century historical writers were unable to write "proper" history. It is impossible to deny that history writing in the past does not hold up to modern scrutiny in many respects. But this should not mean that historians ought to ignore the work of preceding generations of men and women who endeavoured to uncover the past, or contributed to its circulation. Such a position would completely obscure a vision of the past not monopolised by professional historians, but rather

[620] Bolingbroke, *Letters on the study and use of history*, 260.
[621] S. Johnson, *To the Hebrides: Samuel Johnson's 'Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland' and James Boswell's'Journal of a tour to the Hebrides'*, R. Black (ed) (Edinburgh: Burlinn Ltd, 2011) 10.

circulated orally, in imagery, or in panoramic, published national histories available on the commercial market. It is to this accessible "popular" vision of the national past, not to the historical profession, that historians, artists, poets, and playwrights might all contribute, and it is this vision of the past that a study of historical culture enables us to recover.

Historical culture is predicated on the idea that "facts" were and are perceived as being separate from fiction, but that fact and fiction were not and are not incompatible with each other in the spread of historical culture. Both factual and fictional endeavours have contributed, and continue to contribute, to a vision of the national past not reserved for professional historians – or politicians. Historical culture also acknowledges that what we might call a "representation" can also be accepted as "true" and "factual". Hayden White's *Metahistory* can arguably be credited with forcing a reluctant historical profession to participate in the "linguistic turn", but also to admit that the aim of their discipline was and is nothing more or less than the creation of essentially fictional narratives.[622] But White's ideas have had little effect on the way in which historians actually practise history. It seems that White's primary impact has been to change the way in which historical sources can be and have been approached (and appropriated) by scholars outside the discipline of history. I do not wish to argue that historians need to accept the independent existence of facts or truth (bearing in mind that the two are not the same), nor do I intend to singlehandedly assert the existence of an external reality. However it should not be seen as naive to accept that people in the past held a view of history which they believed could be verified by evidence – that for some people, facts existed, and the past was made up of them. National historical narratives differ from

[622] H. White, *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973)

fictional ones in that they are *accepted* as truth, or *expected* to be truthful, by most people, and are engaged with in a way that differs from the way in which people engage with fictions. Is this distinction something we should dismiss? Should we, like Johnson, revel in the erudition of the present, and take grim pleasure in exposing the errors and biases which previous generations have been so credulous as to accept as factual? Or should we see ourselves in perspective: try to understand where previous generations' ideas about the past came from, how those ideas circulated, and how they might relate to the popular vision of the past that is current in the twenty-first century?

Previous work on the image of Boudica, much of it by scholars of English literature, has shown that it is possible to point to specific representations of Boudica as revealing some aspect of the cultural history of a given time. This has often been done with little regard for the contemporary discourse of the time under examination. Instead a presentist vein of enquiry has prevailed, intent on excavating evidence of misogynistic attitudes to Boudica and the condemnation which resulted from those attitudes. But that is based on *a priori* assumptions which are themselves the result of the present's prejudices about the past. Thus I feel obliged at this stage to restate an earlier conclusion: that Boudica was never universally condemned, nor did her womanhood make her an undisputed villain. But to make such a statement is to give credence to the view that writers, artists, and audiences were participating in a conspiracy of judgment for or against an acknowledged fact of history. I have argued here that audiences, writers, artists, and people generally, in every generation, engaged with Boudica as an historical fact, not as a fiction, even if they were engaged in fictionalising her story. And even if they did sometimes judge her behaviour negatively, to ignore her entirely would

have been impossible. Boudica's story was not an unpopular play that never need be restaged: it was an episode in a constantly repeated narrative of the past.

Broadly speaking, this thesis has been an articulation of the need to widen the focus of the practise of the history of history. The historian of history should look outside the canon of historical works to literature, drama, art, film[623], and all manner of other media when seeking to understand how the past has been produced, circulated and understood. Historians must read deeply into the context of specific cultural products and make connections with the minutiae found in personal correspondence, periodicals, and the minutes of committee meetings, to name but a few examples. By doing so, historians will be able to see a clearer, more fully-formed picture of particular moments in time, without being overly reliant on the questionable notion that all minor episodes can be mapped onto larger social or political phenomena – unless, of course, the evidence points in that direction.

This thesis is not an argument for interdisciplinarity, but an assertion of the capacity for historical enquiry to reveal how fact and fiction have converged (and diverged) to constitute understandings of the past. Such an assertion of the capacious boundaries of the history of history is, I think, necessary at this point in time. As we have seen repeatedly in this case study of Boudica, scholars of literature have often misread historical works in which Boudica appeared, particularly those produced before 1800. Scholars of literature have taken what were intended as works of fact and treated them as essentially fictional, or at least endlessly interpretable, with little or no regard for the long-understood divergence of fact from fiction in the minds of creators. William

[623] The story of Boudica was first imagined on film in 1926, but all that remain are still photographs. A synopsis is available on the British Film Institute website: [http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/27031?view=synopsis&availableLicense=yes]

Camden, Raphael Holinshed, Edmund Bolton, and many other historical writers from the earlier period all held themselves to a methodological standard distinct from poets and playwrights, and they were wary of the potential for myth, fancy, and fiction to contaminate "the facts". At the same time, Thomas Heywood and William Shakespeare knew themselves to be creating works of fiction based on matters of fact. That these distinctions were important in the past should dictate that they remain important to scholars in the present. This does not mean that we should dismiss works by Heywood and Shakespeare, to give but two examples, as peripheral to the development of popular ideas about the past, but we must distinguish between the spread of ideas about the past, and the development of the historical discipline. Much remains to be done in this regard.

It has also struck me as I come to the end of this project that historians should focus on the historical cultures of individual nations, at least until they have a firmer grasp of the *longue durée* of the past within national cultures. National history is, I am often told, on the way out, but there is no avoiding the conclusion that historians of history have only just begun to understand popular ideas of the past, let alone where they came from originally. There is also no avoiding that the nation was the underlying organising principle of many historical works over the last four hundred years or more (in Britain, at least), and also of peoples' historical understanding generally. Recent historians of history have been quick to compile edited collections that dart from place to place and period to period without regard for national differences. They tend to focus on the period after 1800, regardless of the nation in question, and thus, in the case of Britain, they ignore substantial parts of the history of British history before that

period.[624] This approach ignores the existence of a "popular" idea of history before the modern age, and lends undue credence to the "invention of tradition" paradigm, not by proving it, but by allowing its basic chronology to go unquestioned. It remains to be understood just how an understanding of historical culture might influence studies of national identity, especially before 1800.

This brings us to the "invention" of the past and national identity. If present-day historians are concerned with matters of fact, and we accept that our predecessors were equally intent on the search for truth, then is it appropriate to speak of the past as an "invention"? Is it accurate – truthful, even – to reduce the past to, in essence, something epiphenomenal to the present – that is dependent on the present for its content and character? While it would be impossible to argue that the past has not been subject to conscious distortion in some circumstances, this can hardly be accepted as the rule given the number of individuals involved in the circulation of national historical narratives. We have already seen that Hobsbawm and Ranger's paradigm ignores the many ordinary people who took part in understanding and celebrating the past, sometimes the very distant past. As the case of Boudica in Wales showed, popular ideas of the past could not be changed very easily, even if evidence could be found to support a new conclusion, a project taken very seriously by Morien. "Queen Buddug" is immortalised in Cardiff City Hall as a Welsh heroine, but people today express surprise when they learn of her presence there. "Isn't she an Essex girl?" they might ask.[625] Far from a successful "invention" of a new and celebrated tradition, the monument to Boudica in Cardiff commemorated a sceptical public that was never fully convinced. I

[624] I refer here to recent work such as S. Berger (ed), *Writing the nation: a global perspective* (Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) in addition to works in this vein cited previously.
[625] This quotable quote comes from a London cabbie whose name I should have asked.

therefore support the conclusion made by Anthony Smith: that a narrative of the past must be convincing enough to be perceived as "authentic" in order to function as a constituent of national identity. But, unlike Smith, I would argue that this "authenticity" need not be established by professional historians or archaeologists, or any other "elite" group. The public is capable of "authenticating" its own historical understanding by participating in its circulation. We must at the very least acknowledge that even if there is a desire within some groups for a "useable" past, there is an equally acute desire for an "authentic" past outside the academy.

Ultimately, this thesis is an argument for the quotidian nature of the past. A culture of history has existed in some form or another in Britain – as it has in many other nations – for centuries, and historians of history have only just begun to recover it. It might seem naïve, credulous even, to support Bolingbroke's pronouncement, cited above, that the love of the past is inseparable from human nature. Perhaps I will not go as far as that, lest I am accused of believing in something as unfashionable as an unchanging human nature. But humanity and its past are, I think, inseparable. If there is a metanarrative of historical understanding, it is a metanarrative of minutiae that demonstrates that understanding. Small occurrences, little coincidences, and individuals – above all, individuals – each interacting with other individuals across space and time, and leaving only the smallest trace of the intensity or otherwise of their connections to their time, their place, and to others: these are what the historian of historical culture must seek to discover and, with respect, to understand.

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